

Saturday 28 July 2018

Amateur photographer



Sony RX100 VI
A 24-200mm lens in your pocket:
 Sony's technological marvel reviewed

TESTED

Passionate about photography since 1884

Smart photos

Ways to achieve the **best possible images** from your camera phone

Mono magic

Winning black & white entries from APOY 2018

Saving elephants

The **World Press Photo**-winning story of a Kenyan sanctuary



The art of boudoir

Shoot **sexy but classy** portraits with our guide to this fast-growing genre

Loupedeck+ We test the new version of this highly regarded editing console



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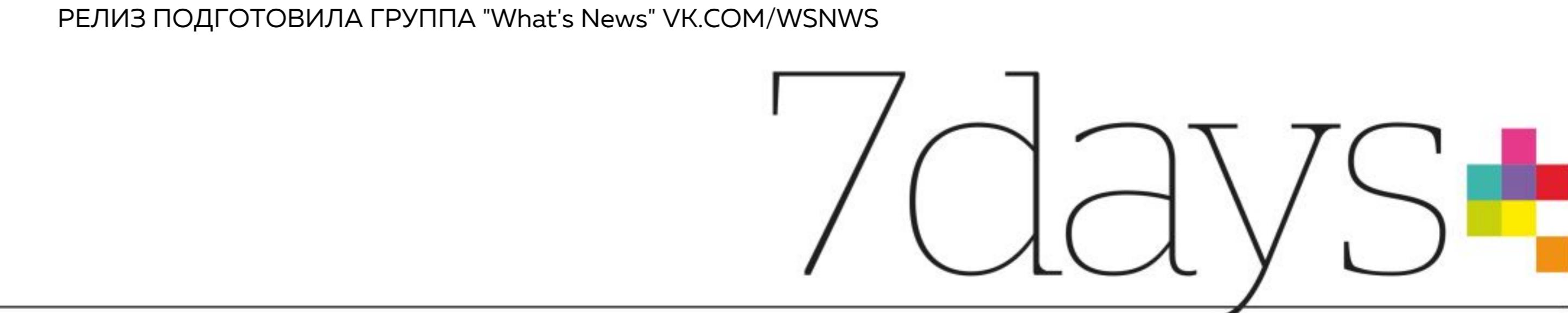
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A week in photography



For a long time serious photographers tended to look down at 'phone snappers', and there still remains a bit of prejudice (on either side, to be honest). It doesn't need to be an either/or situation though; as the old belief goes, 'the best camera is the one you have with you,' and the quality of image-processing software in today's smartphones is staggeringly good. So

in this issue, top smartphone photographer Jo Bradford explains how to get the best of both worlds: good-quality images *and* convenience. Undoubtedly, most AP readers will have a smartphone, so turn to page 12.

Talking of convenience we also review Sony's RX100 VI superzoom compact. And I reveal how to get better boudoir photos (page 32). So never let it be said that AP is short of variety.
Nigel Atherton, Editor

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK



IMAGES MAY BE USED FOR PROMOTION PURPOSES ONLINE AND ON SOCIAL MEDIA

One Canada Square

by Terry Hall

Fujifilm X-T20, 10-24mm, 15sec at f/16, ISO 200

THIS moody mono shot was uploaded to our Twitter page using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. It was taken by photographer Terry Hall. He tells us, 'I am interested in architectural photography, especially in London as there are so many great buildings. Canary Wharf is particularly interesting as most of

the buildings are so modern. I particularly wanted to shoot a long exposure looking up at the One Canada Square building. I used a tripod and an ND filter to capture a little movement in the clouds. I then converted it to mono in post processing and pushed the contrast and level adjustments.'

PermaJet



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If you'd like to see your work published in Amateur Photographer, here's how to send us your images:

Email Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@ti-media.com.

CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 26.

Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.

Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 26.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Geoff Harris



A Nikon 1 bites the dust

Nikon has officially discontinued its 1 series mirrorless camera range, including all the 11 models released since 2011. While the company remains tight-lipped, industry watchers are expecting a new range of full-frame mirrorless cameras to be announced around the time of the Photokina 2018 photo show in September.

Luminar 1.3.0 update now available

Editing software Luminar 2018 has been updated, with version 1.3.0 opening raw photos faster, adding DNG Camera Profiles, improving batch processing on Windows, and bringing the Windows and Mac versions more in-line. Owner Skylum also announced progress with its DAM digital asset manager. See skylum.com for more details.



Photo-reportage winners revealed

The winners of the Marilyn Stafford FotoReportage Award, given to female documentary photographers addressing important environmental, economic or cultural issues, have been announced. The winner is Turkish photographer Özge Sebzeci for her proposed project on the marriages of displaced Syrian refugee children in Anatolia. Visit www.marilynstafford.com.

The AIs have it

Chinese smartphone maker, Huawei, has devised a new wheeze for a photo contest – one of its judges is the artificial intelligence (AI) system in its P20 Pro phone. Trained using 4,000,000 images taken by pros and picture editors, the AI will assign each photo a score based on parameters like focus, jitter, colour and composition.



BIG
picture

Nikon publishes wedding photography 'Look Book'

An illustrative guide to classic, current and emerging trends, Nikon's first-ever wedding photography *Look Book* is curated by the Nikon European Wedding Collective – a panel of top wedding photographers and influencers from across Europe. According to the Collective, a current big trend is 'Drama',



such as that seen in this image taken by Samo Rovan in Slovenia.

The *Look Book* forecasts three new wedding photo trends: Fashion Style, Simplicity, and Professionals Only (where couples ask guests to leave the photography to the hired professional).

Aspiring and established wedding photographers can find tips and advice via the *Look Book* at <http://bit.ly/nikonlookbook>.

Words & numbers

There are hundreds of millions of smartphones with cameras, and you have that many more photographers... it's increasing people's visual literacy

Stephen Alvarez
National Geographic photographer

SOURCE: EMARKETER

24 billion
Number of smartphone users in 2017



Make this summer a competitive one

 TWO BIG competitions that are particularly close to AP's heart are open for entries, starting with Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year 2019. This competition is now in its eighth year, and in addition to AP editor Nigel Atherton, several new judges have been announced, along with some challenging new categories. Under the guidance of the chair of judges, David Loftus, who does a lot of Jamie Oliver's photography, the new jurists include Claire Hyman, a well-known photography collector, Rahul Singh, president, National Restaurant Association of India, Per-Anders

Jørgensen, a leading Scandinavian food photographer and founder of *Fool* magazine, Jock Zonfrillo, a top Australian chef, and Lucy Pike, head of photography at WeTransfer. New categories include the Champagne Taittinger Wedding Food Photographer, designed to show how nuptials are marked with food and feasting across the world, and the Food Stylist Award.

'We can't wait to see the work of our entrants this year,' says the founder and director, Caroline Kenyon. 'Every year, there is a new approach, a new angle, the world seen through fresh eyes.'

'It's really exciting to see the amount of recognition our winners receive in the media across the world. And incredibly rewarding to hear about our finalists' amazing success stories that flow from being part of our Awards. That means a huge amount to my team and me.' You can enter now at www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com. The closing date for entries is 10 February 2019.

If you're more into seascapes than seafood, check out the Shipwrecked Mariners' Maritime Photographic Competition, which again features Nigel Atherton as a judge. Despite its rather dramatic name, this competition seeks an eclectic range of images from amateurs and professionals – images which capture the essence of Britain's historic connection with the sea, be they of merchant ships, fishermen, coast, harbours and ports, leisure activities or, of course, shipwrecks.

You will need to trim your sails quickly though, as the deadline for entering is 13 August 2018. Enter via shipwreckedmariners.org.uk/photography-competition-2018 or enter via social media using the hashtag #UltimateSeaView.



The winner of the 2018 competition, taken by Noor Ahmed Gelal



Film digitisation made easier

 IF YOU'VE ever tried to flatten film to be photographed with a digital camera, rather than scanning it, you'll know it can be a challenge. Hence the announcement of pixl-latr, a new product that has hugely exceeded its funding target on Kickstarter.com.

Essentially the product is a diffusing plate that uses pins and frames to flatten 35mm, 120 film (up to 6x12) and 5x4 sheet film so it can be shot with a digital camera. You can still pledge some cash on Kickstarter to get one – pledge £40 or more and you'll get a cool pixl-latr metal pin as well as the pixl-latr. Let's hope we get a chance to review it in AP.



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P1000 boasts world's largest 125x zoom

 BRIDGE cameras remain popular, despite the pressure from DSLRs, mirrorless models and indeed smartphones, and Nikon has upped the ante with the new Coolpix P1000 – featuring a 125x optical zoom lens. The monster integrated lens has a 24-3000mm equivalent focal range and f/2.8-8 aperture range, backed up by a 16MP CMOS sensor and expanded ISO settings up to 6400.

Other improvements include a new control layout, 4K video recording at 30 frames per second, Dual Detect Optical VR image stabilisation and a larger display screen. The image stabilisation features 5 stops of camera shake compensation, which will certainly come in useful when shooting handheld with such a far-reaching



Is that a 24-3000mm lens or are you pleased to see me...

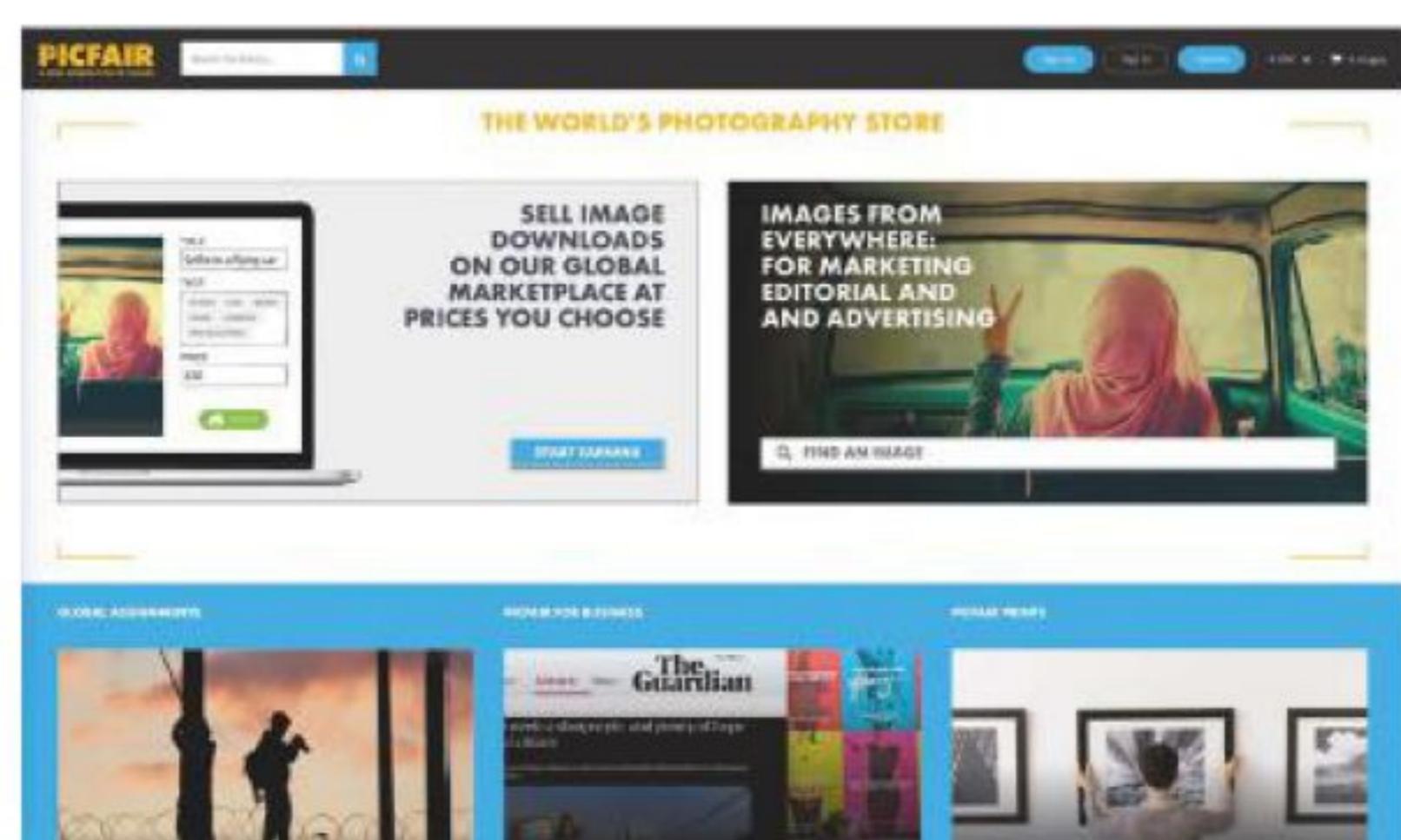
lens. As well as raw support, the P1000 includes a focus mode selector and a control ring for adjusting white balance, manual focus and other settings, along with a 3.2in, 921k-dot vari-angle rear screen. Meanwhile, a snap-back zoom feature temporarily expands the field of view for super-

telephoto shots – a useful feature for sports or wildlife photography. Nikon also announced the ML-L7 Bluetooth connected remote as an optional accessory.

The Nikon Coolpix P1000 goes on sale in September from the usual outlets, with a suggested retail price of £999.

Picfair in crowdfunding campaign

 STOCK image library Picfair has opened a crowdfunding campaign, offering its community of 35,000 photographers a chance to own part of the business. Photographers can invest as little as £10 in return for a stake. 'Photographers helped us spread across the globe – uploading over six million images from over 130 countries – and now we want to give them an opportunity to own a part of what they've helped us build as we continue our journey over the coming years,' founder Benji Lanyado explains. 'Our



As well as selling your pictures, you can get a stake in Picfair

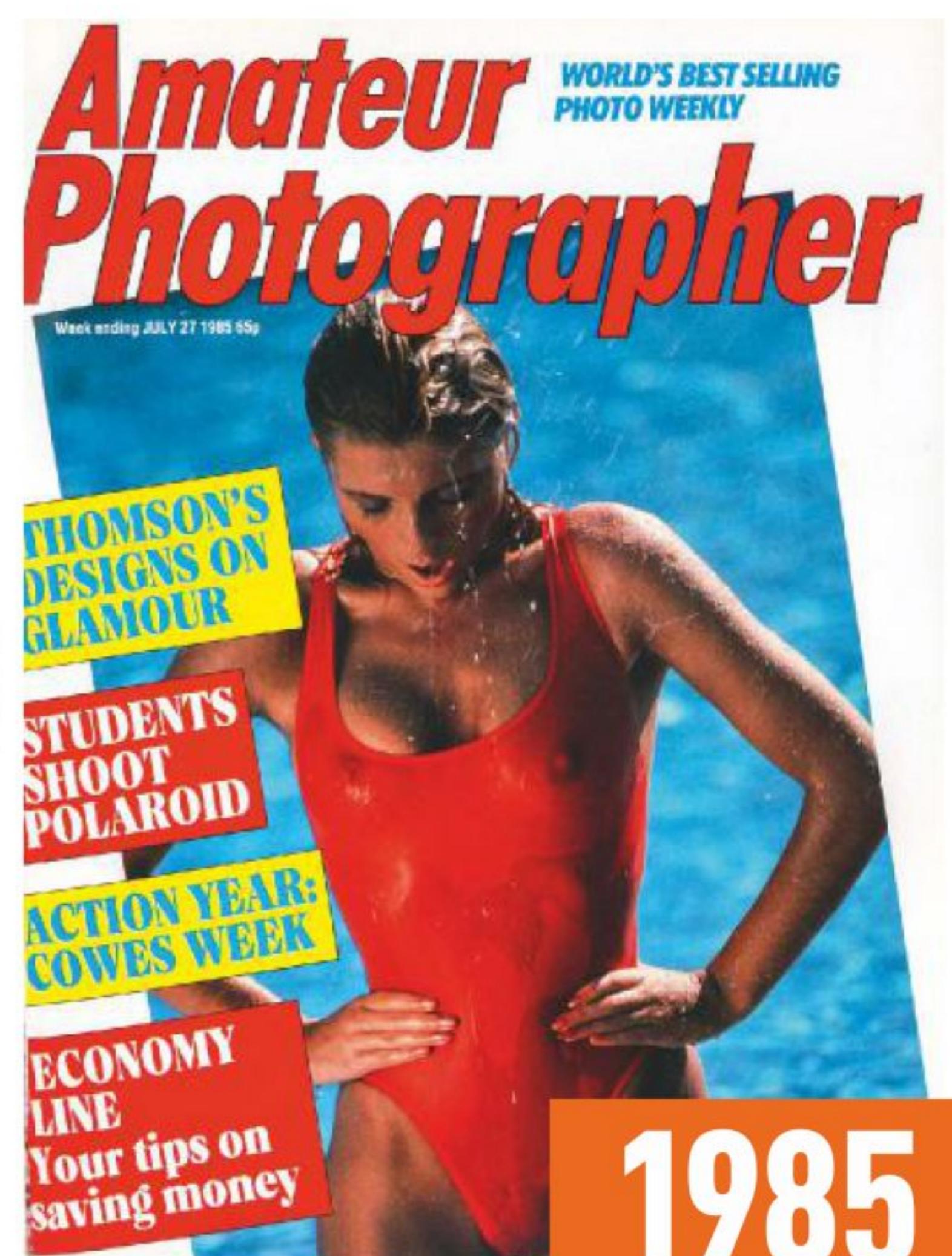
mission is to bring photographers back into the heart of an industry that has profited from their incredible hard work while gradually marginalising them.'

The campaign is now open to Picfair members, and will then be rolled out to the general public via the CrowdCube.com crowdfunding site. See www.picfair.com.

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Back in the day

A wander through the AP archive. This week we pay a visit to July 1985



OUR THIRD swimsuit cover in a row is no coincidence – until at least the mid-90s, bathing belles were the *de rigueur* cover image choice for AP's hard-pressed editors, as it's summer and we're photographers, right? By 1985 things were heating up considerably, but as our current cover shows, we've taken the temperature right back down again – taste and social conventions move on. Steamy cover models aside, there was an eclectic mix of content inside this issue, including a far-from-glamorous, but still very interesting, documentary feature on the hard lives and early-morning drinking habits of Smithfield meat market workers. It gives a real insight into how London has changed in the past 30-odd years, although with Big Bang deregulation of the City just around the corner, the writing was on the wall. We'd no longer have the confidence to run such unadorned cover lines today – 'Students Shoot Polaroid' – but this era was the heyday of magazine sales, without any competition from that pesky internet.



This feature gave an insight into working people's lives

Photo Stories

Warriors to conservationists

Ami Vitale tells the story behind her World Press Photo-winning portfolio 'Warriors Who Once Feared Elephants' depicting a Kenyan sanctuary

The Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya is located in the ancestral homeland of the Samburu people. Unlike many such projects that are run by Western organisations, Reteti was established by the Samburu people. Wildlife conservation is not a simplistic issue to indigenous populations living in poverty and having to deal with the threat to people, property and farming that the animals often pose – but here, in this part of Kenya, people are beginning to see the positive side too.

National Geographic photographer Ami Vitale documented the work done at Reteti, and her portfolio recently scooped first prize in the Nature (stories) category of this year's World Press Photo. She picks up the story.

'I learned about this dream of an elephant sanctuary five years ago. It wasn't white and foreign, it was the Samburu people saying "We want to protect our landscape. We want to protect the wildlife that's here. We don't want orphaned elephants leaving and never coming back."

'So against all the odds, people with really nothing, no power or money managed to do the impossible. The landscape in this region was barren 25 years ago. The only animals you could find were those little tiny antelopes called dik-diks. No elephants, no rhinos, nothing – largely because of poaching. As a result the people suffered too. And then you start to understand that the elephants are nature's greatest engineers. They ripped out the trees, which allows grass to grow and all these other species to thrive.'

One of the greatest perils for baby elephants, beside poaching, is the danger of falling into wells as they try to reach the water. Owing to climate change the wells are having to be dug deeper and deeper, and once the babies fall in

they can't get out again. 'Once they would have just been left to die, but now everybody in Kenya has a phone and they know exactly whom to call – they call the sanctuary.'

Thanks to the sanctuary, poaching levels have dramatically decreased in this part of Africa.

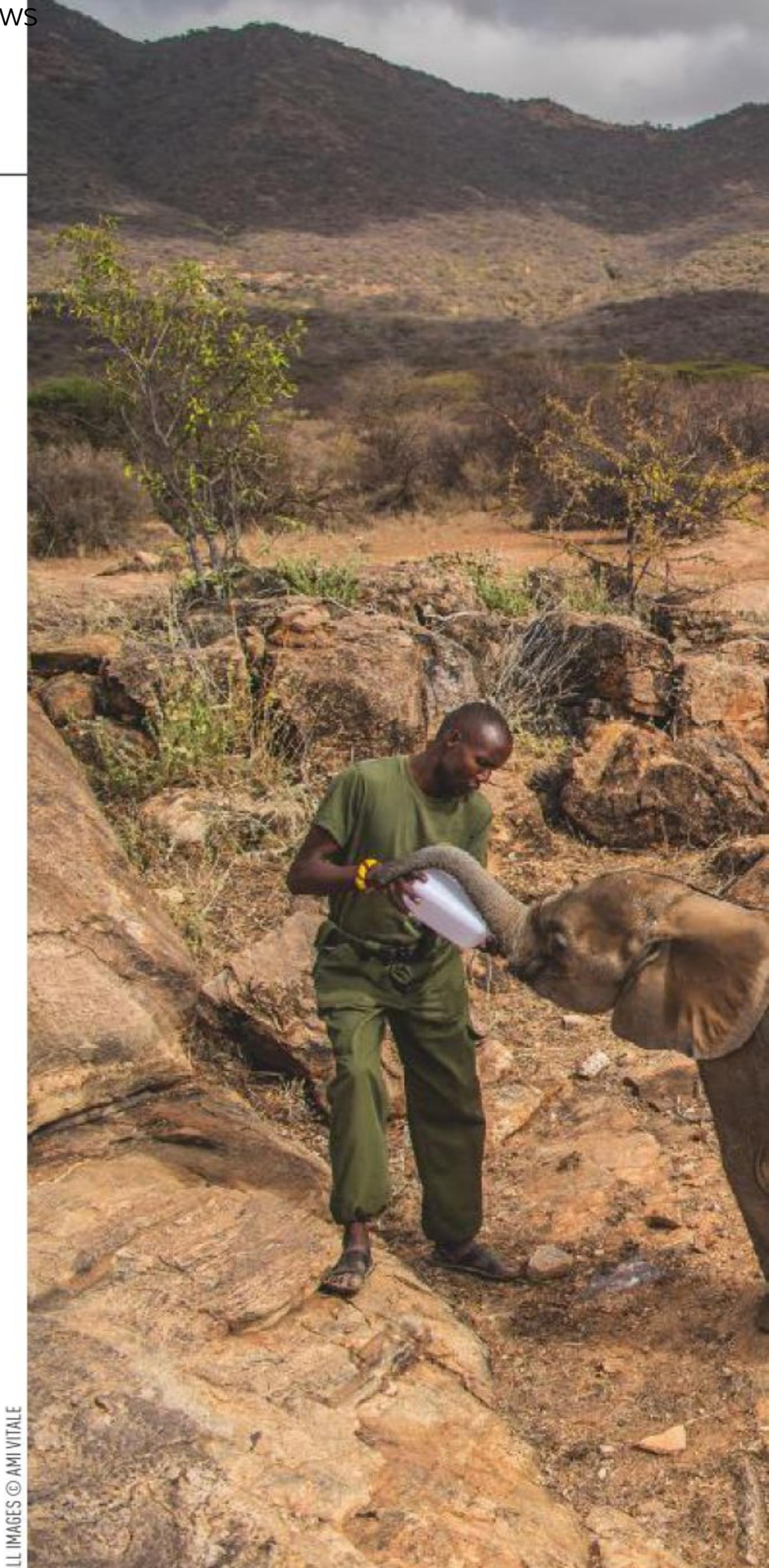
'So here's the story,' Ami continues. 'These people, who were really afraid of elephants for so long, have now become their greatest protectors. All the men here are, or were at some time, Samburu warriors. But now they're teaching the orphans to be wild. They have minimal human contact, they just allow them to be out in nature until they're able to be reintroduced to the wild, often to their own herds again.'

'The other really beautiful part of this story is that it's the first sanctuary in Africa that hires indigenous women to be keepers. That is incredible. I've been watching this ripple effect just to see how people are treating the women in these communities.'

A world of coexistence

This is so unusual that, Ami reports, people will trek for 24 hours from the surrounding areas to visit the sanctuary and to see the women working with wild elephants. Ami speaks very passionately about the significance of this.

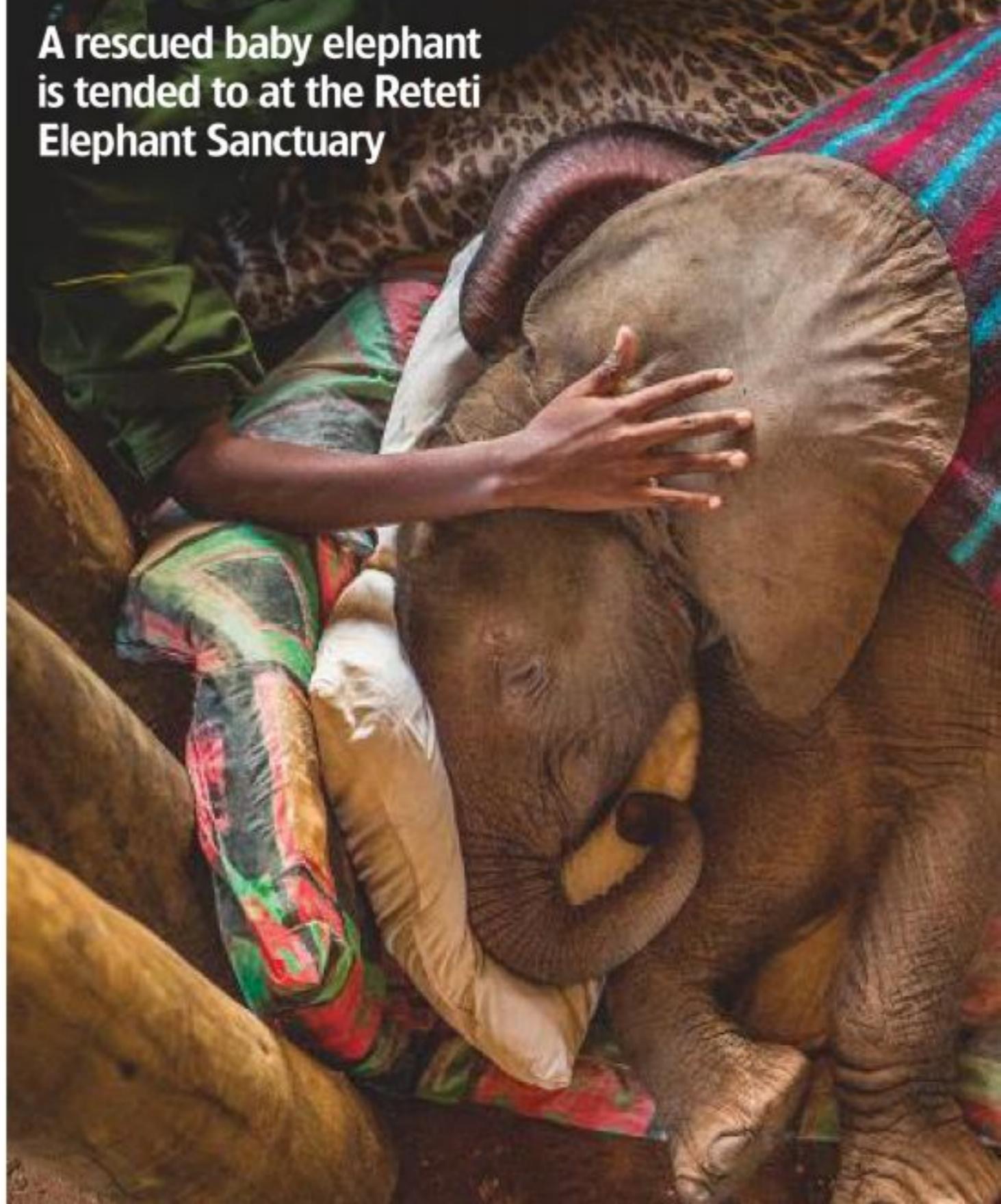
'These are the kinds of stories that are really important because they give us a way forward where we can reimagine a world of coexistence. All these stories happening in Syria right now, the stories happening with wildlife – it's one and the same. They are all really intricately connected. We're all on this planet together. So this may look like it's a story about adorable cute elephants but it's not – it's actually a story about all of us. It's about our future, our home and where we're going.'



ALL IMAGES © AMI VITALE



A rescued baby elephant is tended to at the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary



AMI'S KIT



'THE CAMERA and lens do not make the photo – the photographer does', says Ami. 'But, the right gear can make a big impact in how we make images. But here's a small piece of advice: while it's tempting to acquire all the latest kit, I recommend you carry as little as you think you need. Less is more.' As a Nikon Ambassador Ami uses a range of Nikon DSLRs but her main body is a D4s. 'Incredible technology and my workhorse camera,' she says. 'It allows me to shoot in very dark situations without any extra lighting.' She also has a D850 and D750. Her favourite Nikon lenses include the 14-24mm f/2.8G, 24-70mm f/2.8G, 24mm f/1.4G, 50mm f/1.4G, 85mm f/1.4G, 70-200mm f/2.8G, 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6G and 24mm and 85mm Tilt-Shift lenses

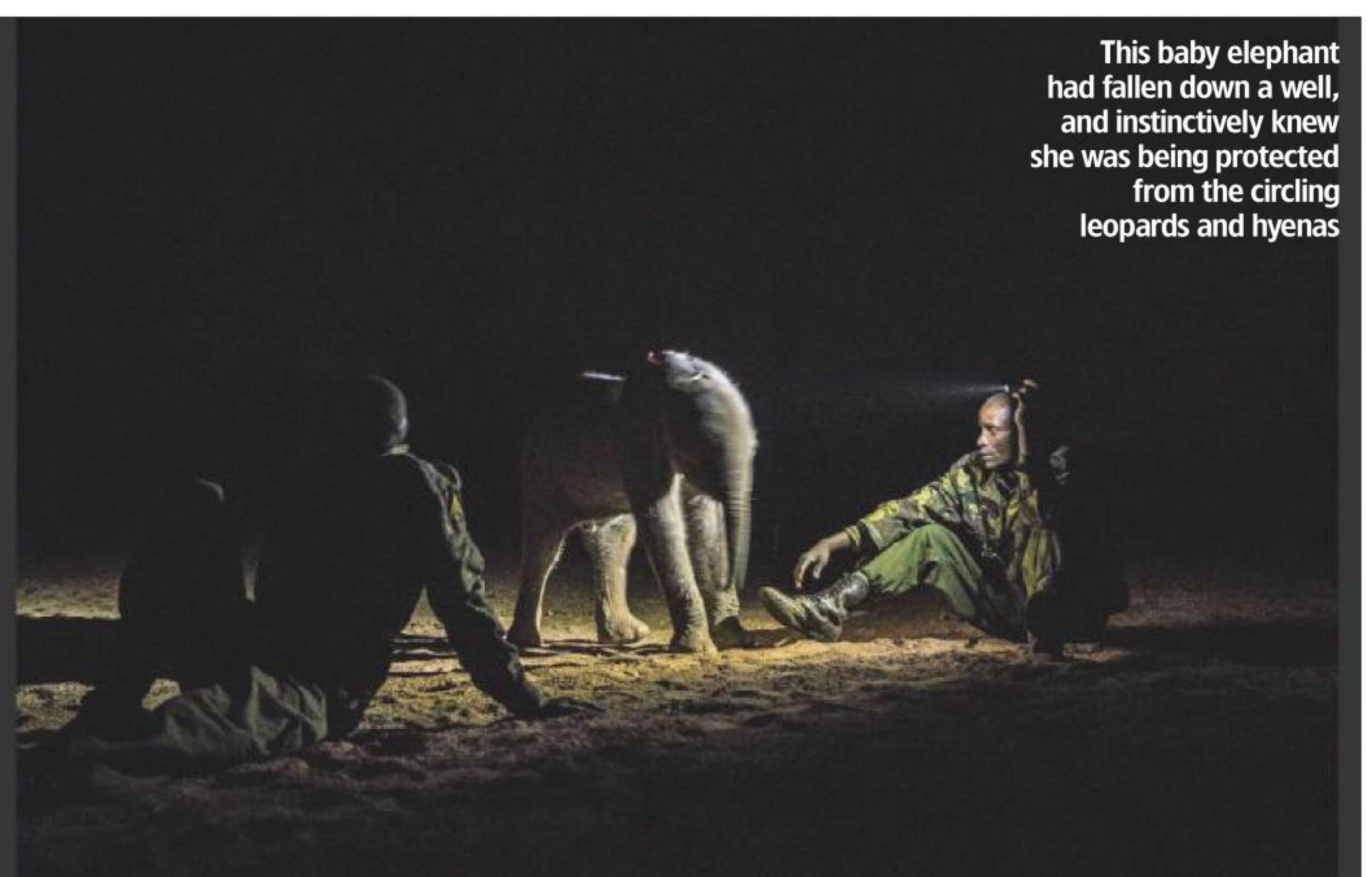


Keepers feed baby elephants at the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in northern Kenya

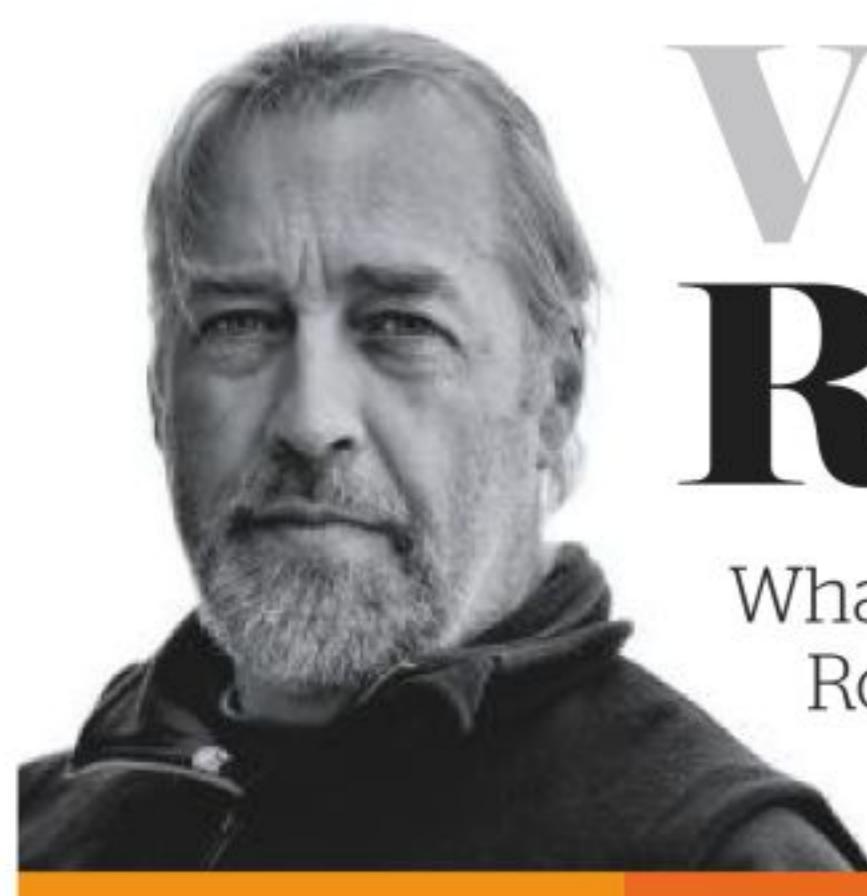


Left: Mary Lengees caresses Suyian, the sanctuary's first resident, who was rescued in 2016 at just four weeks old. Women at Reteti are seen as bringing nurturing skills into the workforce

Right: An older elephant shows younger orphans how to take a dust bath. A coating of dirt protects elephants against the sun and insects



This baby elephant had fallen down a well, and instinctively knew she was being protected from the circling leopards and hyenas



Viewpoint Ross Samson

What is the use of a second camera body?
Ross Samson debates the pros and cons of swapping lenses between bodies

Whenever the kit of named professionals is detailed in a magazine, I notice that two identical bodies are often listed. This is most true of those who travel to all corners of our earth. These second bodies, I assume, are almost purely for emergencies. Lesser mortals often 'upgrade' from a 4 to a 5 or iii to iv, while keeping their old buddy as a 'second' body. (To me, this appears to be an excuse for not parting with the camera, rather than a valid strategic photographic move!) The second body is, therefore, a camera that the photographer is familiar with. If not identical, it is at least very similar to the new 'first' body. Nine times out of ten, the sensors will be the same size. And the lenses will always be interchangeable. The thinking, such as there is, would appear to be: keep everything similar for simplicity's sake (KESSS).

The immediate problem with this philosophy is that these second bodies appear to be 'spares' more than working cameras. And working simultaneously with two cameras that do exactly the same thing makes little sense, except perhaps when filming.

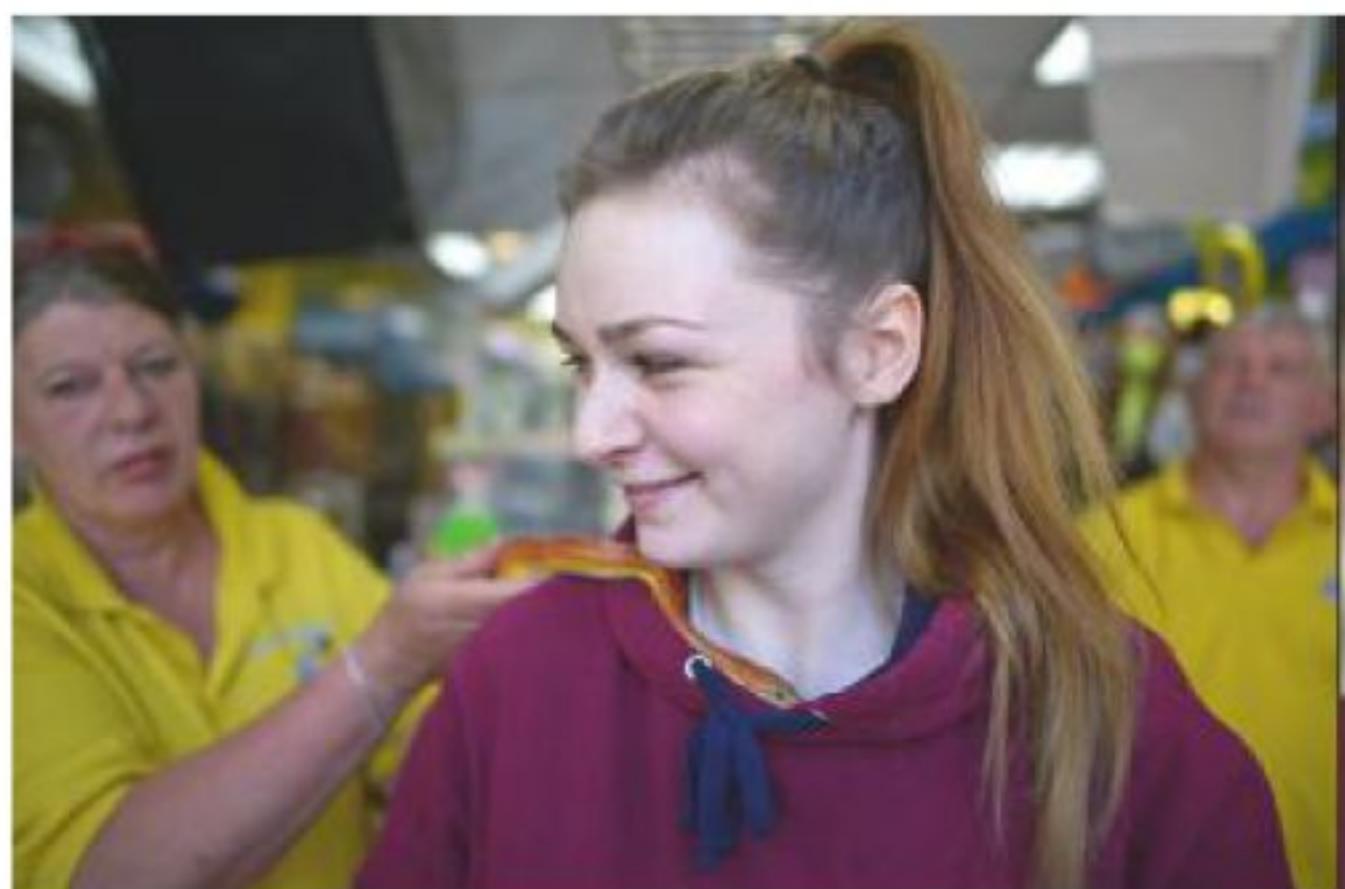
Fitted with different lenses the two cameras can, of course, be ready for different roles: one for wider shots, the other for longer; one for the 'environment' or group dynamics, the other for portraits and candid, personal moments. While the interchangeability of lenses on identical bodies is a valid logistical issue, it is creatively meaningless. Swapping lenses between bodies is literally pointless. Artistically,

the two camera bodies simply become vehicles for your lenses.

For years now, I have matched a full-frame to a cropped-sensor DSLR when out shooting, with the latter usually dedicated to longer views. This mismatch of bodies produces many creative advantages. The cropped-sensor body fires away like a machine gun; the full-frame body chugs away in slow motion but gives me far more pixels. The cropped sensor effectively makes my 200mm lens a 300mm lens. The full-frame body allows the 18mm end of my super-wide zoom to remain super wide. And swapping lenses between the bodies affords another fantastic advantage. My two fast primes – 24mm and 85mm – become 36mm and 127mm on the cropped sensor. Two lenses become four virtual lenses. And for expensive primes, this is a real bonus.

When flush, I sometimes wonder if a 35mm fast prime would not nestle neatly into my camera bag. Then I remember that it is, in effect, already there. The question to ask is what is a second body for: back-up insurance for emergencies? To make you look more professional? To lend to your spouse as an impromptu second shooter? In these instances, go for an identical or near-identical second. If the answer is creativity, then how is more of the same going to help?

Ross Samson was an archaeologist and then a publisher, before becoming a furniture designer. His plant-oil paint was used on the exterior of a royal house last year. He is an amateur photographer and organiser of the Meetup group Southside Snappers.



Jemma and Spatch shot with 24mm and 85mm lenses swapped from their usual bodies

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 26 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

In next week's issue

On sale Tuesday 31 July



Brave new wide

We explain when to go wide and how to get the most out of wideangle lenses



Fujifilm X-T100

Michael Topham reviews this attractive new entry-level mirrorless camera

Wildlife on your doorstep

How to improve your photographs of the exotic wildlife at your local zoo

In your face

Magnum legend Bruce Gilden speaks to AP about his provocative portraits



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Jo Bradford



Jo is a professional photographer, author and Getty Images contributor based in Dartmoor National Park where she offers workshops from Green Island

Studios, a creative studio and colour darkroom. Find out more at www.greenislandstudios.co.uk.

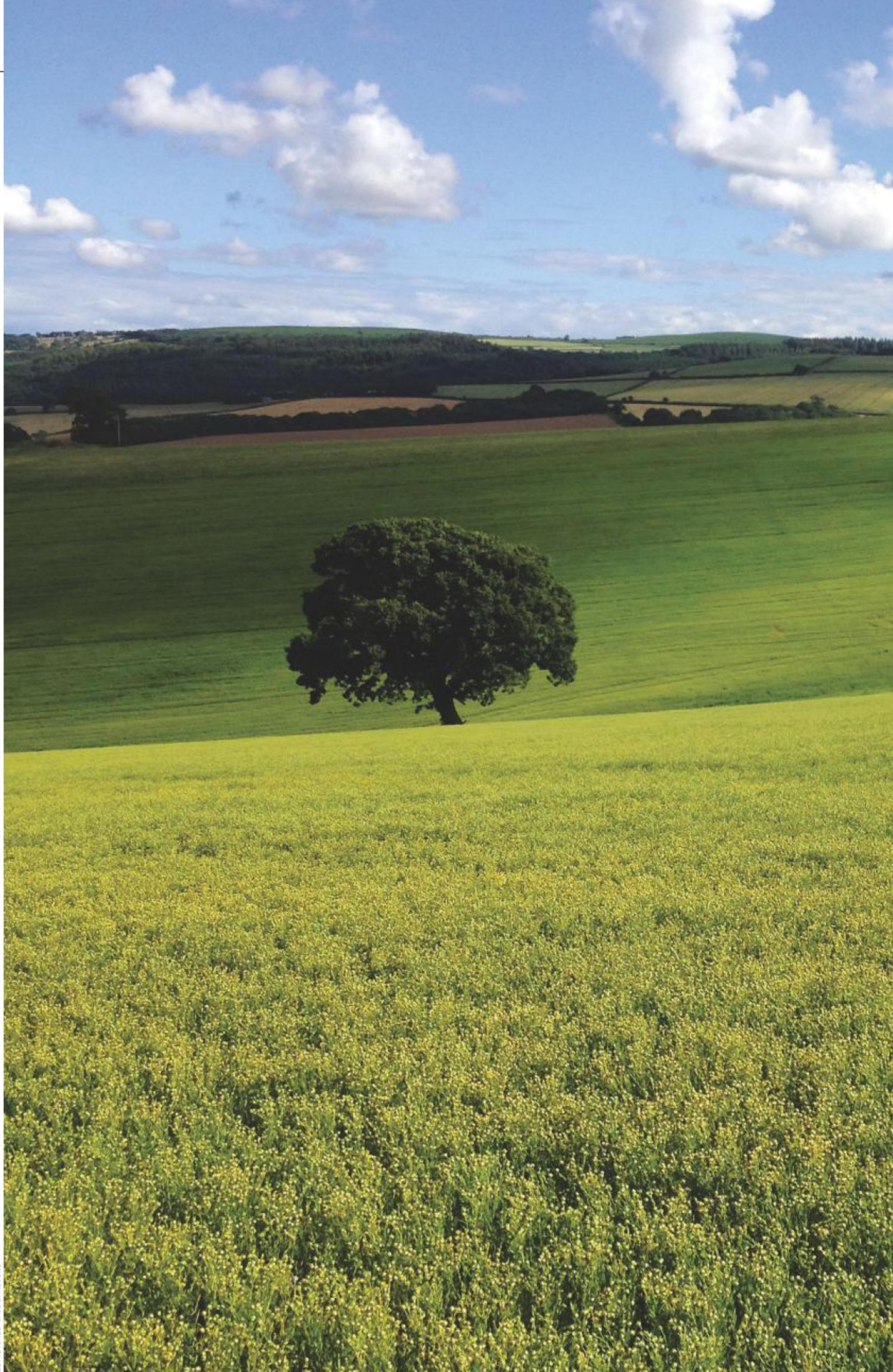
There's a saying that the best camera for the job is the one you have with you when a photo opportunity arises. Thanks to the boom in camera-phone technology, we're lucky enough to have a decent camera to hand to capture all those memorable moments in life. But are you making the most of that powerful tool? Here are some quick tricks and easy post-production tips to get images from your phone that look as good as those from an expensive dedicated camera.

Raw image capture

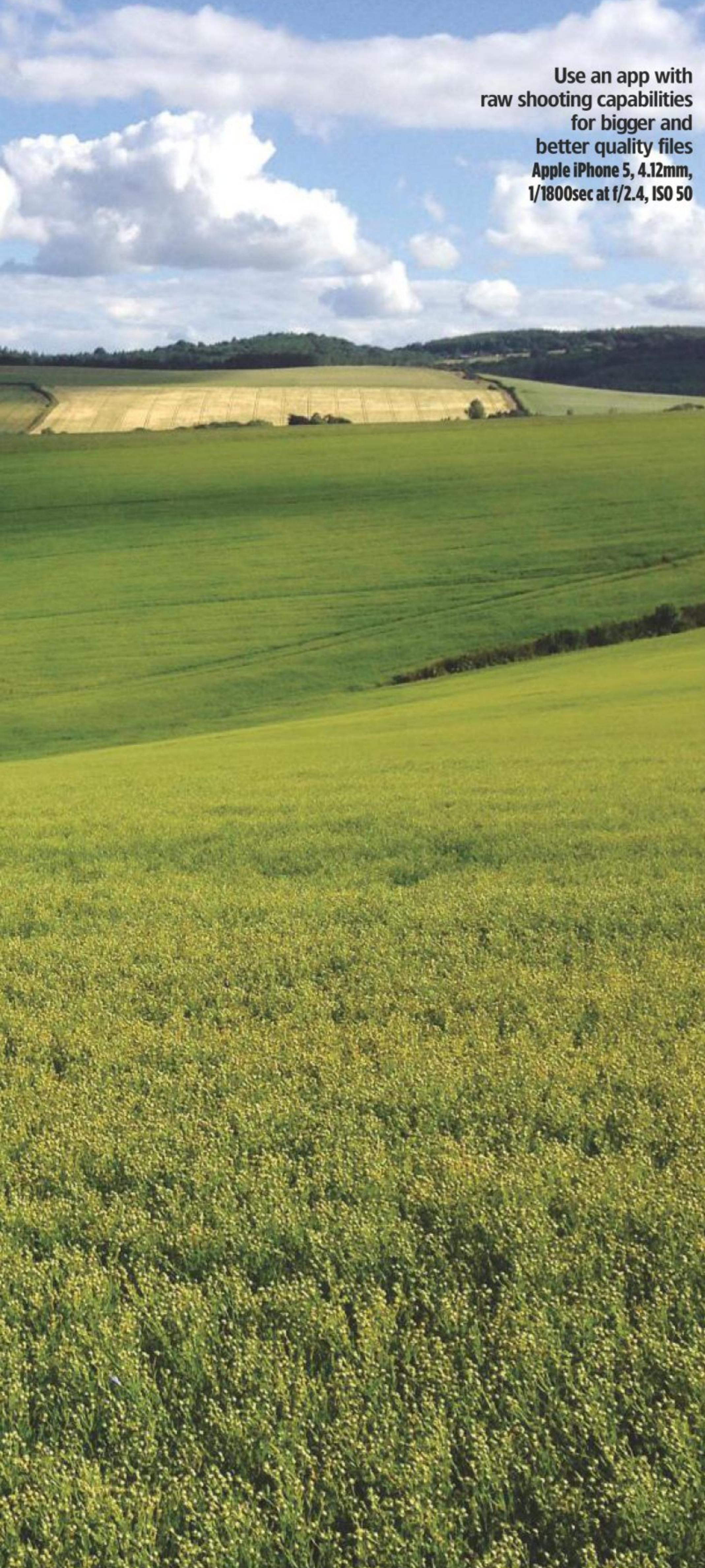
Smartphones automatically save your photographs in a JPEG file format, and as you know, JPEGs are generally only best for files that are going to be viewed on screens. As the gold standard of file saving is raw, then we should aim to work in this format. Smartphones and apps with raw shooting capability have arrived, heralding a new dawn in the timeline of smartphone photography. Raw photos have a lot more latitude for editing later with the ability to make a wider range of corrections to exposure, noise and white balance in a non-destructive way using a host of free and paid apps. As you know, these are large files and will take up a lot of disk space to store and back up. I will talk more about these issues later in this article.

You can also take your smartphone photography to the next level by taking manual control of the camera settings on your

ALL PICTURES © JO BRADFORD



Smart phone smart photogr



Use an app with raw shooting capabilities for bigger and better quality files
Apple iPhone 5, 4.12mm, 1/1800sec at f/2.4, ISO 50



Long exposures are achievable using apps or Pro Mode in Android
Apple iPhone 6s, 4.15mm, 12 sec at f/2.2, ISO 160

Playing with shutter speed

YOU CAN make long exposures of light trails and moving water with your smartphone. For an iPhone use an (iOS) app like Slow Shutter Cam. In Android phones that have Pro Mode, experiment with the native settings. For rapid-fire shooting, experiment with the camera's continuous shooting mode, aka burst mode. I like to overlay the sequence of frames into a single image using the Affinity Photo iPad app for dramatic effect.

Shutter speed experiments require a tripod. For smartphone photography, I use the Joby Gorillapod with its sturdy smartphone-compatible head. It is my favourite because the head that grips the camera has the same size thread as the head on my professional Manfrotto tripod system, making the whole set-up more flexible. I can switch between

the small bendy legs of the Joby and the sturdy, high-grade performance of my more expensive Manfrotto tripod or monopod.



Smartphones also require a sturdy tripod for long exposures
Apple iPhone 6s, 4.15mm, 22 sec at f/2.2, ISO 200

Jo Bradford explains how to maximise the potential of your smartphone to create showstopping photographs

aphy

Technique SMARTPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY



Take manual control of the camera settings with ProCamera
Apple iPhone 5, 4.12mm, 1/1500sec at f/2.4, ISO 50

phone. Thankfully you can override the device's native camera quite easily, unleashing its potential to perform more intelligently.

iPhone manual control: ProCamera

Worth investing in alone for its ability to save your photos as uncompressed raw and TIFF files, you can also make individual adjustments to your ISO, shutter speed, exposure

compensation and a host of other features such as shutter priority using the iPhone's ProCamera app.

Another great tool in the ProCamera app's armoury is the ability to set the focal and exposure points in the same place or to pinch them apart, so that you can set a focal point in one place and expose for the brightest area separately. This can then be locked off with the FE Lock. It is all done very

easily with just a tap-and-press manoeuvre. ProCamera has a nifty stabilisation option for those needing some support for hand shake – it will wait for the phone to be still before closing the shutter, and you can adjust the required stability with a slider.

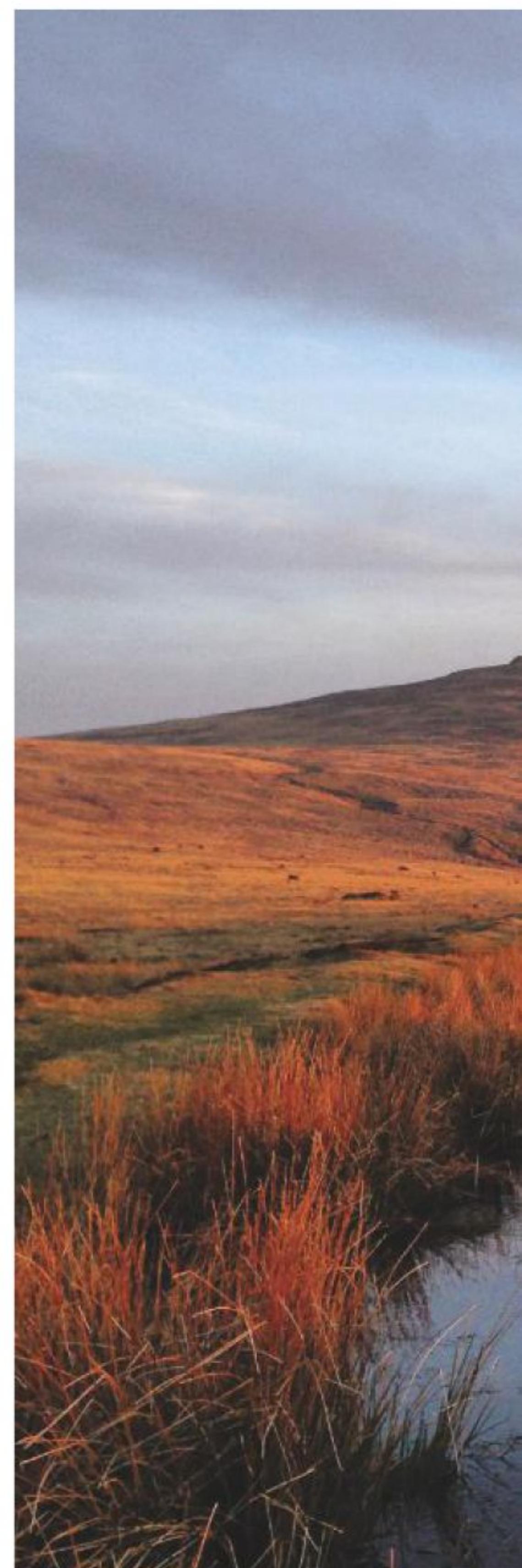
Android manual control: Pro Mode

The camera on some Android phones comes with built-in Pro Mode features. If your Android phone has a Pro Mode, then it will be accessible in the camera settings: swipe down on the = symbol found in the upper area of the main camera screen to reveal the settings menu. The latest generation of Androids can shoot uncompressed raw and TIFF files – a feature that can be selected via the device's Pro Mode settings.

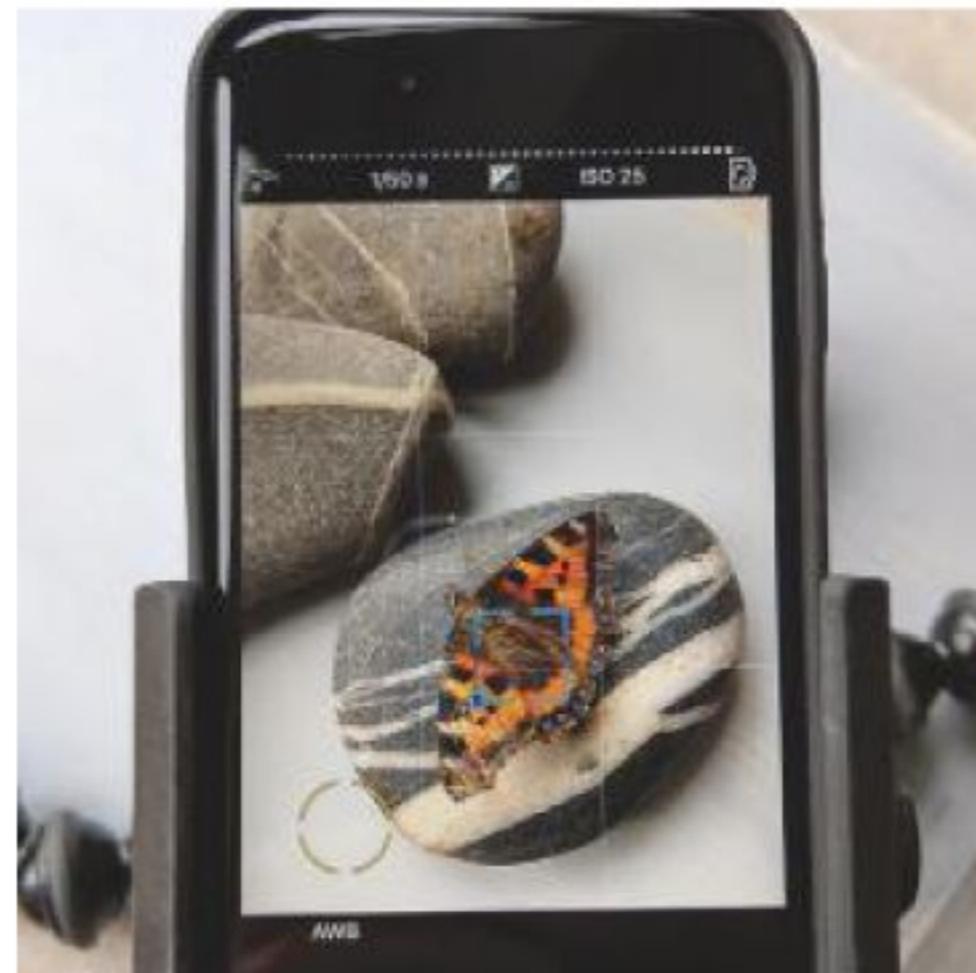
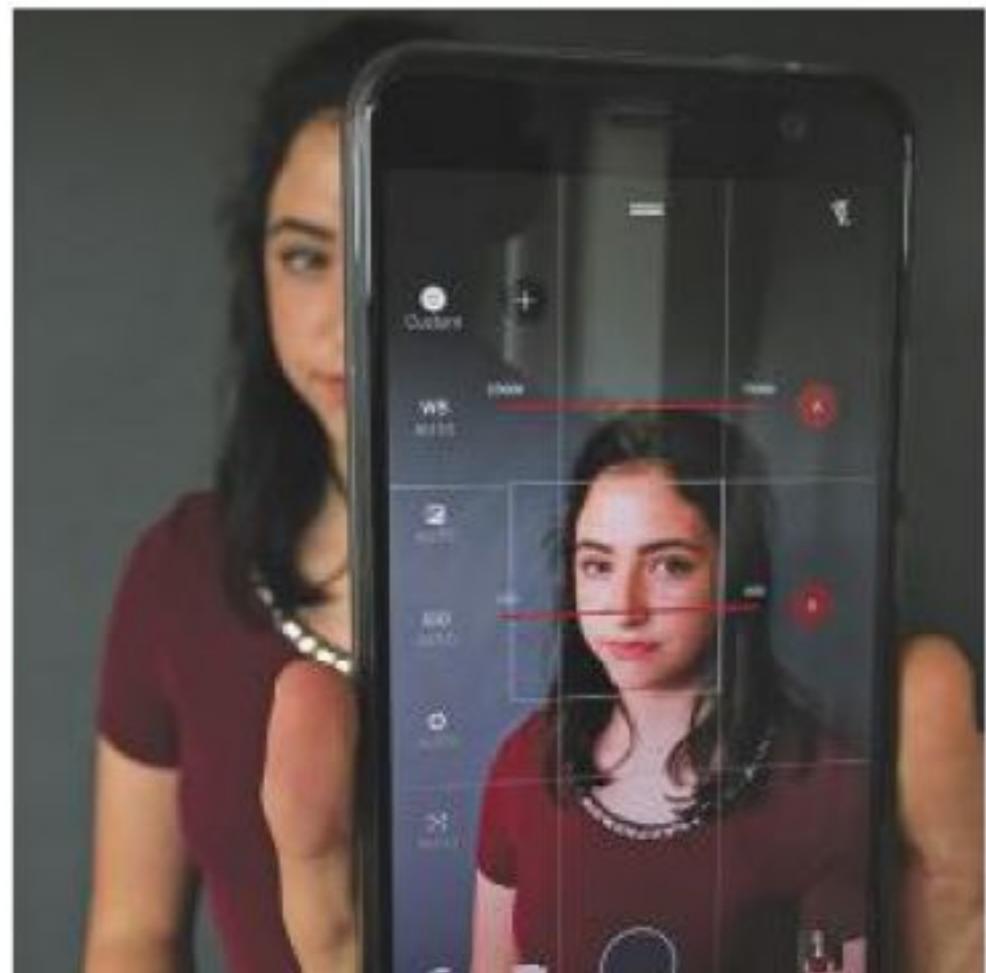
Once Pro Mode is engaged you can make a range of adjustments; individual sliders adjust exposure compensation, ISO, shutter speed, focal range and more. Tap the Auto button at the top of the shutter speed slider to work in a shutter priority mode.

Backing up

With the ability to fire-off uncompressed photos willy nilly comes a big responsibility – the ever-present need to back up your pictures.



JO'S TOP TIPS



ISO

On an iPhone use the ProCamera app to shoot in ISO priority. The ProCamera app has an ISO range of 25-2000. If you're using an Android, use its Pro Mode to alter the ISO. The range of ISO values available varies between devices, but at the least is around ISO 100 to ISO 800.

Focusing

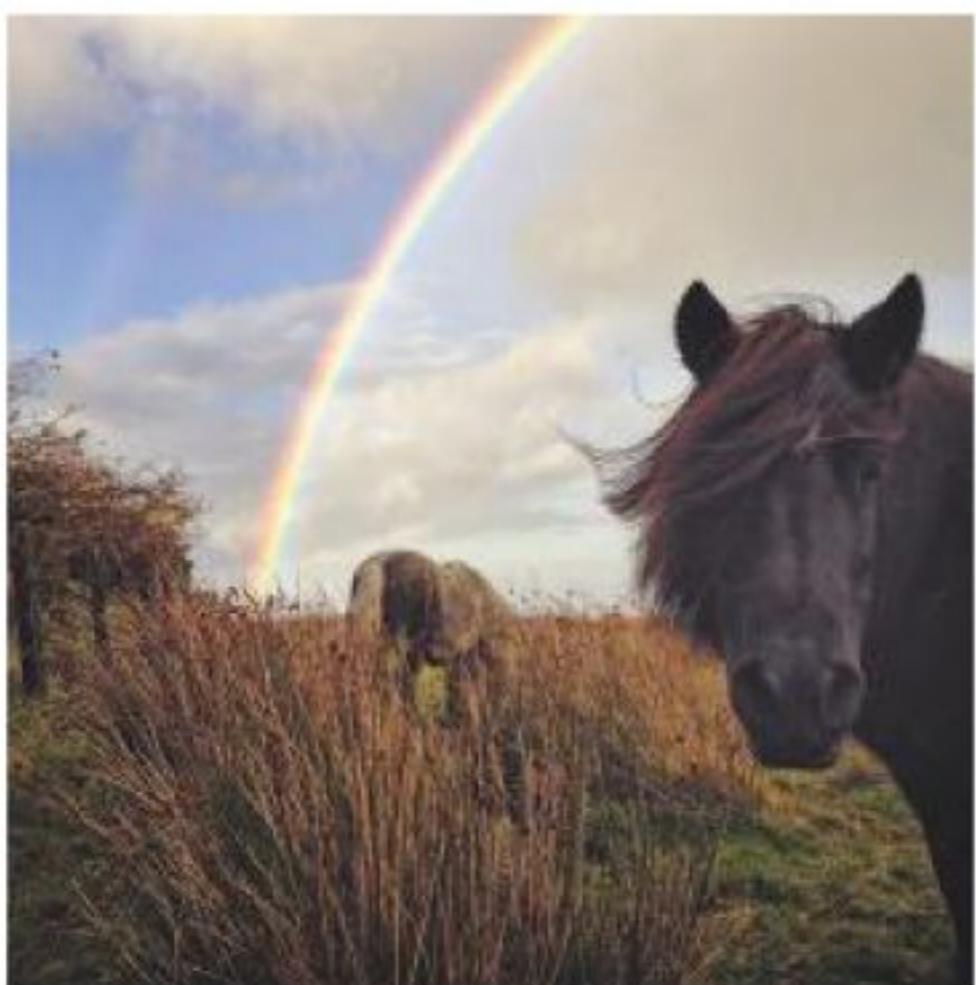
The camera may focus on the centre of the frame, but if you have the subject aligned on the rule-of-thirds grid, tap on screen to focus your image and the focal point will change to that spot. For moving subjects, tap and hold your focal point until the AE/AF indicator appears.

Depth of field

Add some depth of field and lens blur effects with an app like Focos for iOS. For both Android and iOS, experiment with adding subtle and realistic blur and bokeh effects in the edit stage with the Snapseed app. Additional lenses can change depth of field, but will affect image quality.

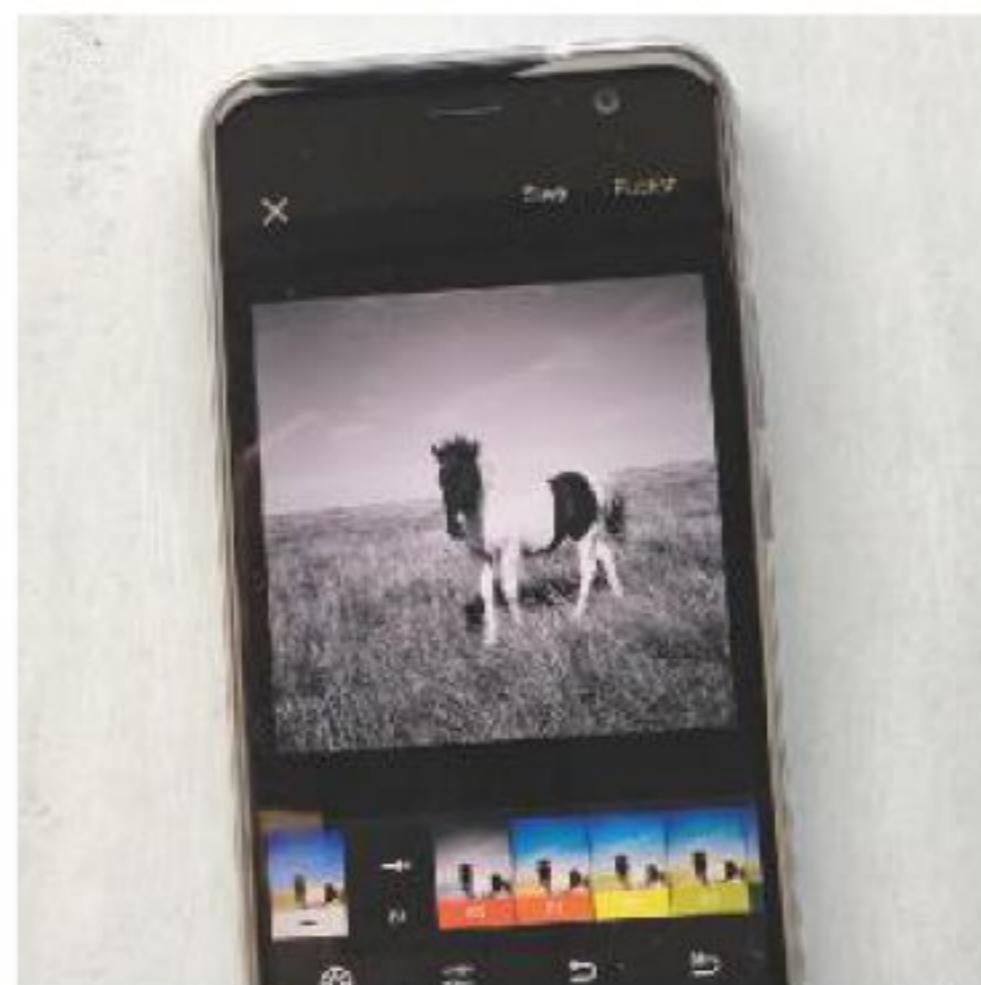
The Grid

On the iPhone, under the main Settings menu, select 'Photos and Camera'. Then under 'Camera', select 'Grid' to turn it on. On Android phones, in the camera, left swipe on the screen to reveal the settings options. Then under the 'general settings' tab you can turn your grid on.



Zoom

Digital zooming decreases image quality as it increases the image size. Optical (lens based) zoom is limited to one or 2x magnification – after this your smartphone will digitally create extra pixels to make subjects appear bigger or closer. Fill the frame by attaching a telephoto lens or move closer.



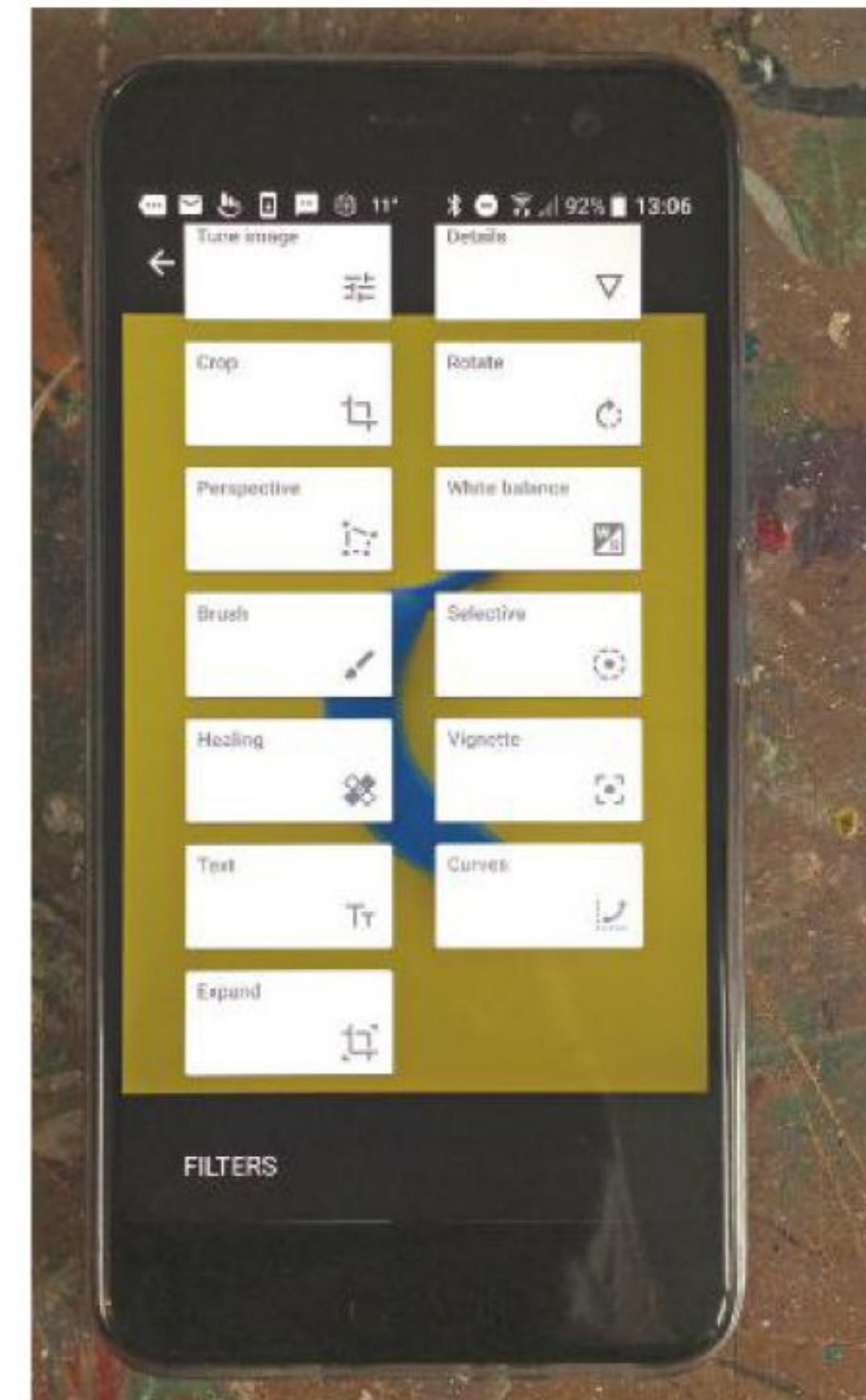
Black & white

I prefer to shoot photographs in colour and then use something like the VSCO app's range of black & white filters to change my image to monochrome. Play with the contrast slightly, as colour photos converted to black & white often look better after the addition of a bit more contrast.

Edit images and add finesse

THERE are a number of good apps to help improve your photos. I favour the free Snapseed app (iOS and Android) on my smartphone for the quick edits, and Affinity Photo on my iPad Pro for more detailed work. Both Snapseed and Affinity Photo have a facility to develop raw files.

Most smartphones automatically boost the saturation when you take a photo. This can make a picture look punchy, but it also looks fake. Turn the saturation down slightly now, so that you are not overlaying even more fakery onto it to begin with. Make it look realistic for now, and trust that you can boost your saturation again later with just the right amount. It will be like a final layer of varnish to enhance your masterpiece at the end.



Snapseed is available for free on Android and Apple phones. It's great for quick edits when you're on the go

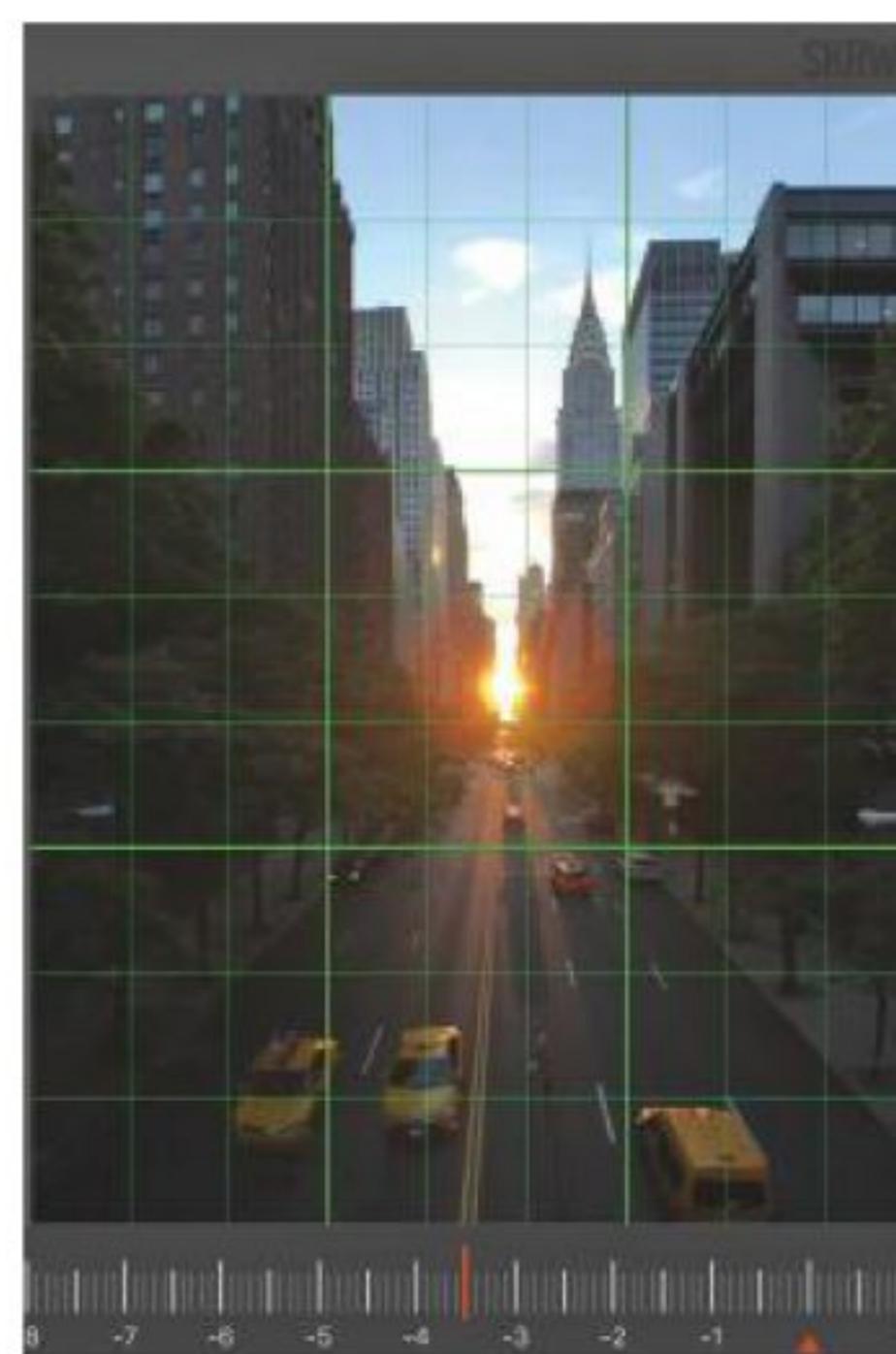
Basic editing workflow

1 Begin any edit with the Rotate and Crop tools to get everything lined up nicely.

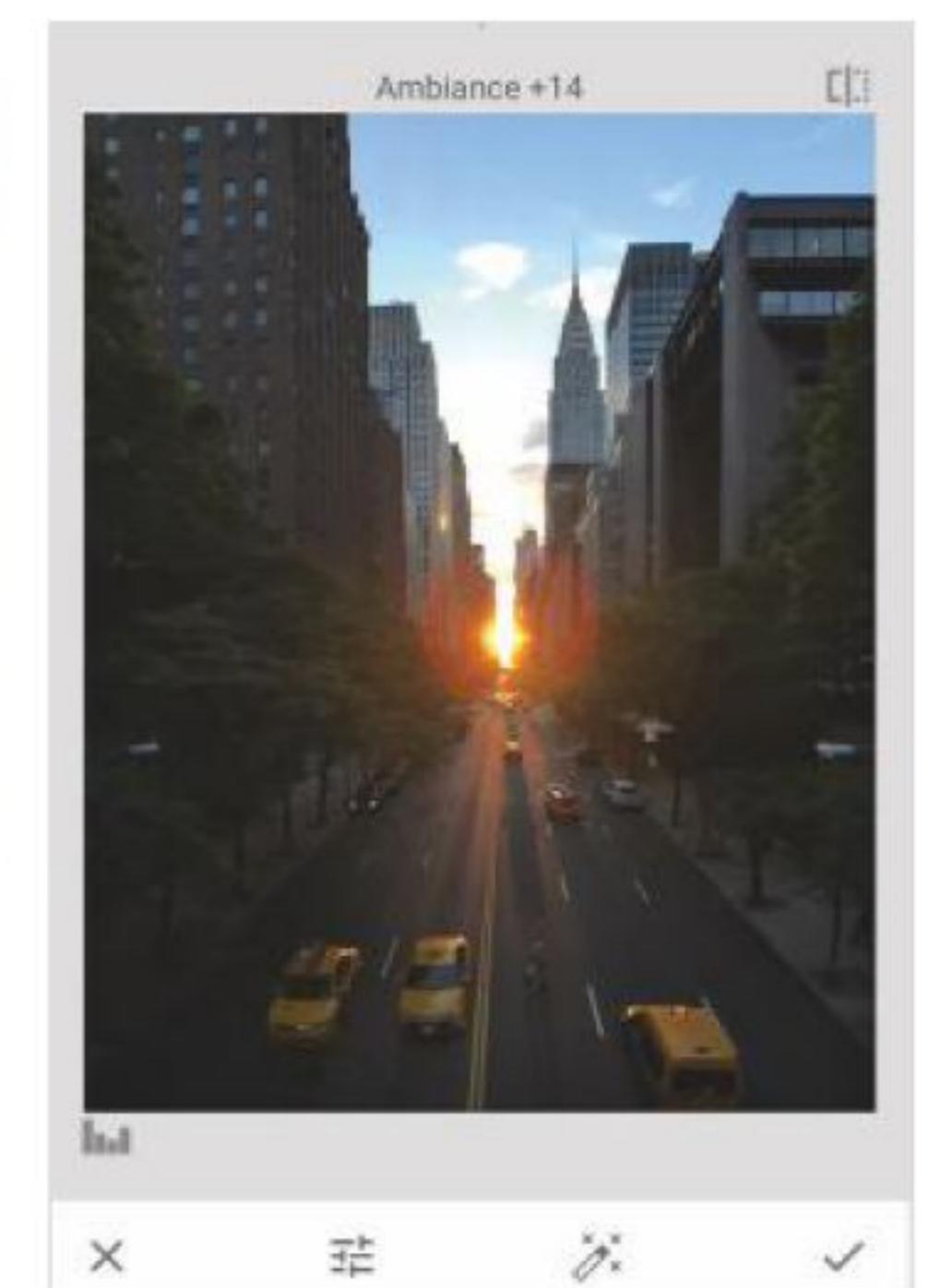
2 For precision adjustments, use the Brush Tool to adjust the Exposure and Saturation, and experiment with the Dodge and Burn feature.

3 For larger adjustments, use the Selective tool. Tap an area that needs adjusting and swipe up and down to reveal a menu including brightness and saturation. Using a pinch gesture on screen, a red blush appears across the area affected by the adjustment.

4 The Tune Image menu holds Brightness and Ambience (the result is like the HDR effect, but less destructive). There are also Highlights & Shadows and Detail tools.



Start off by cropping and straightening your image



The Tune Image menu holds a number of other enhancing tools

Technique

➤ Your smartphone camera roll is just not big enough for the job, and most times, the storage capacity on your device will be insufficient. I can't stress enough how important it is to back up your photos and store them somewhere other than on your phone. Whether you choose to use cloud storage or external hard drives to store your work, just do something, and do it often. Be proactive about moving your images to your safe place and you will never have a 'storage full' message just when you're about to take your best photograph!

Many people go for the cloud option. For those unfamiliar with cloud saving, it involves paying for space on an online server. Uploading everything to that server will keep your files safe from harm. This may work well for some but not for others. It will work well in tandem with a local backup option too, for those who really like to go for the belt-and-braces approach.

I have a cloud backup and I also back all my files up to local external hard drives, and then make copies of those drives – I have three copies of everything. I do this because I have experienced the pain and



Get into the habit of backing up your photos on your smartphone
HTC U11, 4.3mm, 1/7800sec at f/1.7, ISO 99

distress of a backup hard drive dying on me. Unfortunately I learned the hard way that drives are fallible, and now I back up the backup drive too so that I don't ever have to experience that agony again. A simple and uncomplicated transfer of images from your smartphone to your backup is the next thing to consider.

Image transfer

The PhotoSync image transfer app is my preferred method for

rapidly uploading images from my devices to my desktop computer or the cloud for backing up. It works in various ways such as wireless transfer, tethered via USB, and across a Bluetooth connection. It will sync to the cloud storage of my choice for a small extra cost. It works very quickly and only updates the images that are new, saving me time and brain space in this otherwise boring but necessary admin task.



The iPhone Photography Awards

For some ideas and inspiration on what you can achieve with a smartphone camera see the winning pictures at this year's iPhone Photography Awards, which have only just been announced. AP's cover image this week, by Jose Navarro, was one of the entries in the competition. You'll find them at www.ipawards.com.

USING A SMARTPHONE: FOUR WAYS TO PHOTOGRAPH PEOPLE



1 Ambient light

The smartphone camera works best in ambient daylight – natural sunlight is its forte. The fixed lens and wide aperture will allow lots of light in, making it perfect for candid portrait shooting. Hazy days work best, where the sunlight is diffused, giving a soft flattering light for skin tones.

2 Portrait mode

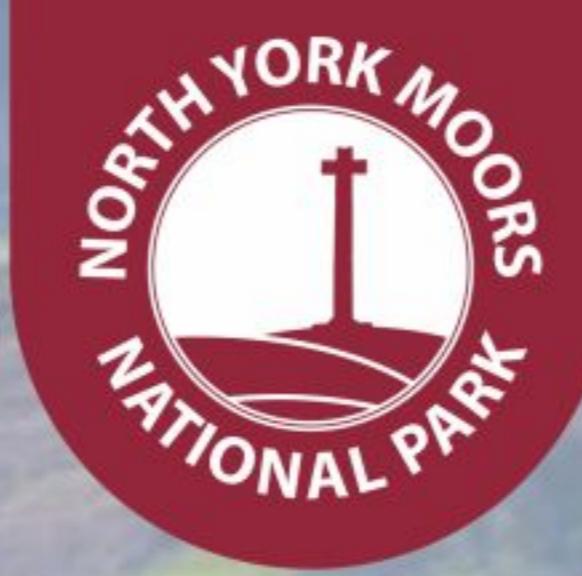
Start with the standard lens on your smartphone camera, and move closer to fill the frame. If you have a dual lens phone, use the Focos app or the portrait mode to blur the background. You may want to try attaching a lens for this type of portraiture; if so, go for a telephoto lens.

3 Low key

Be precise with your focusing here; ensure you tap the screen to focus on the eye that is closest to the camera. Compositions that are based on areas of light and shade make great black & white photos. Portrait mode or the Focos app will separate the subject from the background.

4 High key

The easiest place to shoot a high-key portrait with your smartphone is outside in bright sunlight, in front of a white wall or a continuous tone, light-colour backdrop. Expose for the eyes, then overexpose up to +1 stop. Dodge and burn the highlights in Snapseed or Affinity Photo.



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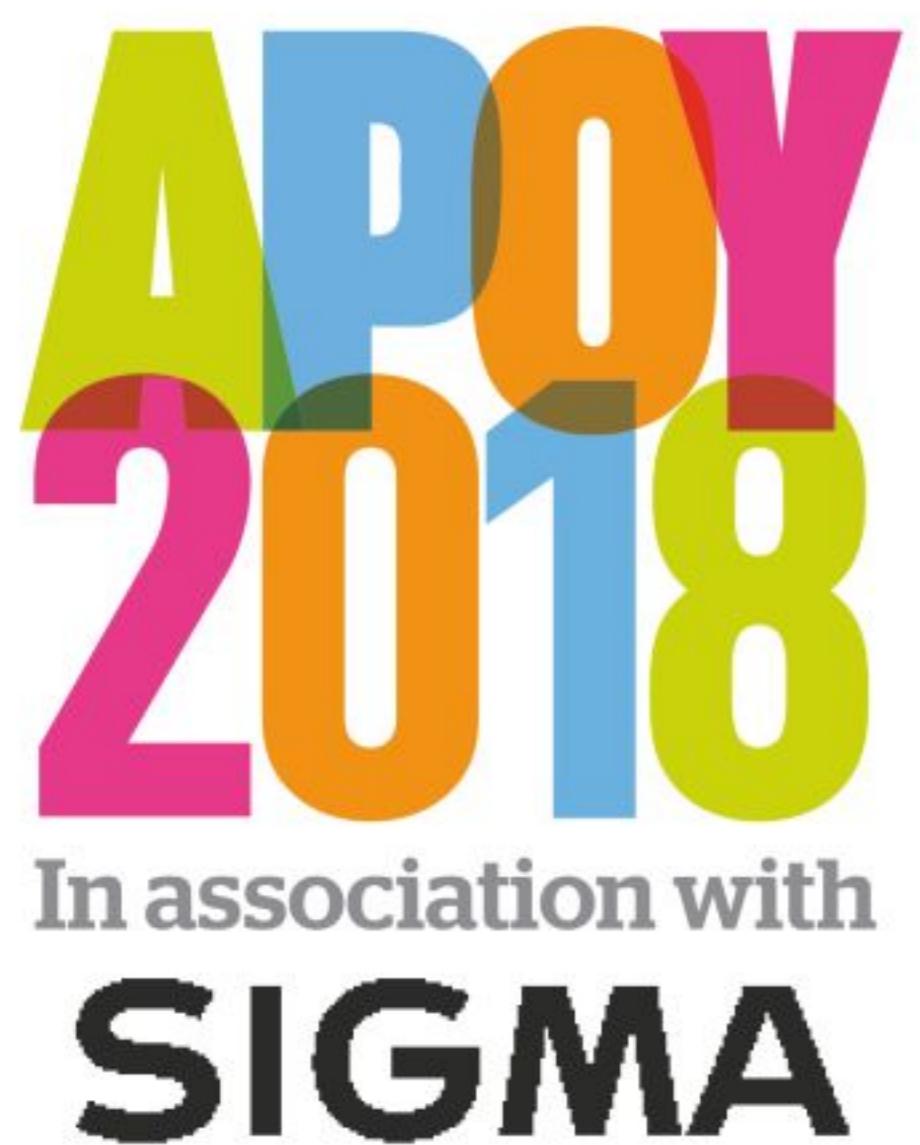
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Amateur Photographer of the Year

We bring you our top 30 images uploaded to Photocrowd from Round Three, **Mono Culture**, with comments by the AP team



1st

Round Three **Mono Culture**



Steve Cheetham wins round three of APOY. He takes home a Sigma dp3 Quattro and a Sigma 1.2x FT-1201 Conversion lens. This medium telephoto lens camera (equivalent to 75mm on a 35mm camera) incorporates a Foveon X3 direct image sensor, which can detect a broad range of light wavelengths. The Sigma 1.2x FT-1201 Conversion lens has been exclusively designed for the dp3 Quattro – when it is attached to the front of the lens, it magnifies the focal length of the lens by 1.2 times (60mm/equivalent to 90mm on a 35mm format), and does not change the f/2.8 aperture value. The total prize value is £1,050.

1 Steve Cheetham **UK** 30pts
Canon EOS 5DS, 16-35mm, 20sec at f/11, ISO 100
Iceland is incredibly popular with photographers, and the iconic mountain of Vestrahorn on the Stokksnes peninsula receives more attention than most. As a result, it's difficult to find an unusual take on the subject, but Steve has come up trumps. This image was made on a cold February morning when the black sand had frozen and a dusting of snow remained underfoot. The rocks and tide create a nice lead-in line, and as the eye travels back, the level of detail becomes apparent.

APOY 2018



2nd

2 Alexandrino Lei Aiorosa China
29pts

Sony ILCA-99M2, 70-200mm, 1/750sec at f/3.5, ISO 400

The interaction between the characters in this picture is wonderful. The eye contact between the boys says a lot about their playful relationship, while the relaxed face of the buffalo being bathed after a day at the plough shows a level of trust that can only have developed over time. Alexandrino has selected an aperture of f/3.5 to throw what could have been a distracting background largely out of focus. It works well.

4th

4 Alan Millin Dubai 27pts

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 100-400mm, 1/2000sec at f/4.5, ISO 100

The domes and towers of Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi, UAE, are perfectly arranged in this composition. It can be tempting to include all of a building in the frame, but selecting parts and cropping accordingly was exactly the right thing to do here. Every shape has a role to play in the balance of the composition – if you cover any of them (including the small spire bottom left) it just doesn't work as well.





3rd



3 Richard Whitson UK 28pts

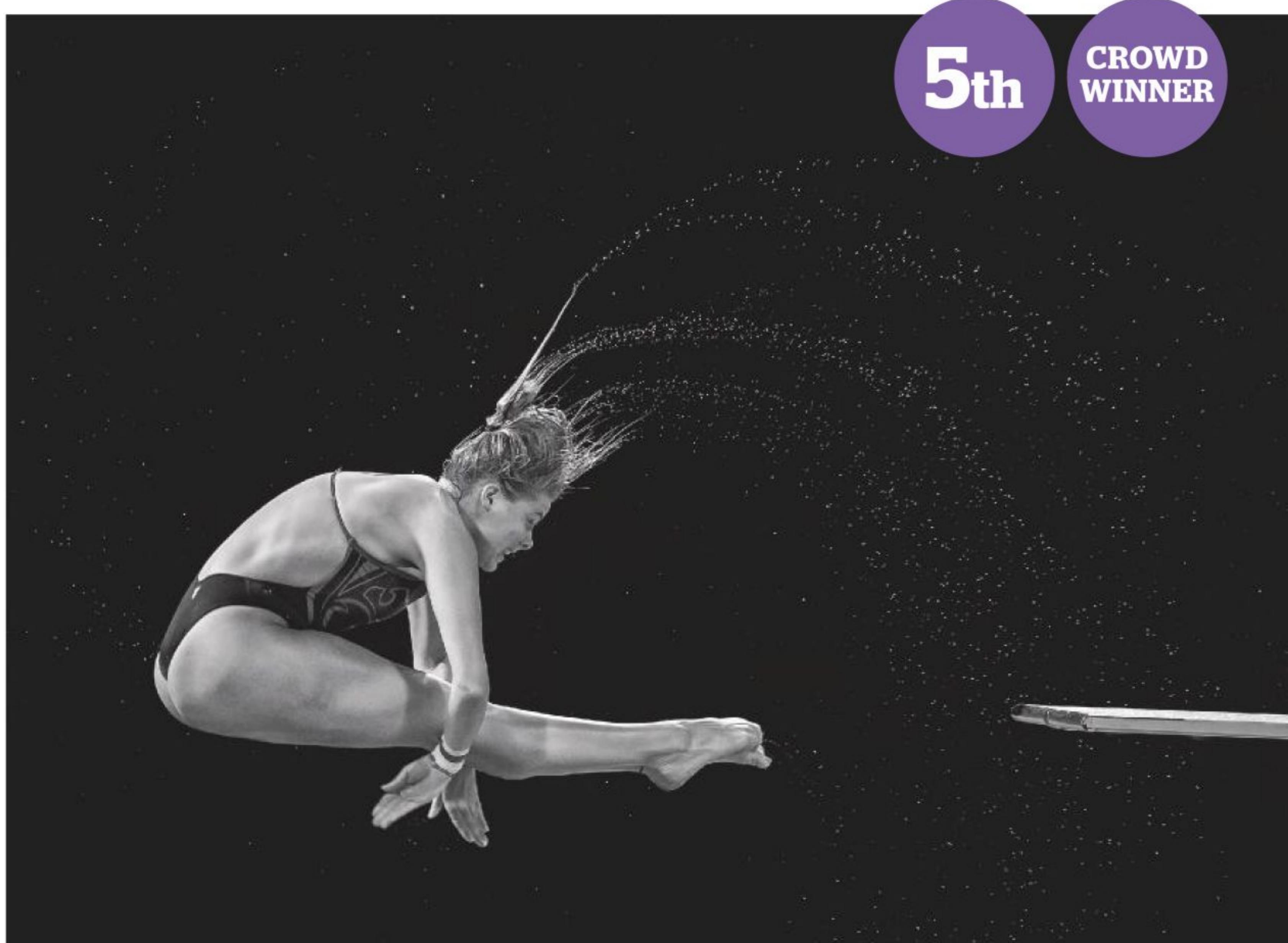
Canon EOS-1D X, 400mm, 1/1600sec at f/4, ISO 100

The islanders of Tiree in Scotland are accustomed to high winds, and those who surf make the most of the blowy conditions. Here, local resident Stewart Cowling is riding the waves at Crossapol. The image works brilliantly as a panoramic, and Stewart's position in the frame is just right, with the line of the wave leading the viewer's eye from left to right, and plenty of room for Stewart to 'travel' into. The backlighting works well, too.

5 Roger Evans UK 26pts

Canon EOS-1D X, 300mm, 1/2000sec at f/2.8, ISO 6400

This wonderful shot of a diver taking part in a nighttime competition won the public vote on Photocrowd, and it's easy to see why. The position of the diver and the arc of spray coming off her hair are spot on, while the water drops really stand out against the dark background. Roger used a shutter speed of 1/2000sec to freeze the action, and while this necessitated an ISO of 6400, any noise is well controlled.



5th

CROWD
WINNER

APOY 2018

6 Simon Hadleigh-Sparks UK 25pts

Ricoh Theta V, 130sec at f/2, ISO 125

The Ricoh Theta V enables artists to create high-quality 360° images, and Simon has used it to good effect here. The staircase feels like an odd optical illusion, forcing the viewer to look twice.

7 Peter Maguire UK 24pts

Nikon D7100, 70-300mm, 1/4000sec at f/8, ISO 200

After a morning of heavy rain, the sun gradually burnt off the clouds, revealing a spectacular scene in Yosemite National Park, USA. The tree at the bottom is crucial to the composition and acts as an anchor.

10 Howard Mason UK 21pts

Canon EOS 6D Mark II, 24-105mm, 2sec at f/14, ISO 800

An event at Didcot Railway Centre provided Howard with an opportunity for some low-light images. The side of the train creates a lead-in line, directing the eye towards the three figures.

**11 Ron Tear UK 20pts**

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 17-40mm, 1/8000sec at f/6.3, ISO 1600

The sheer scale of Aiguille Du Midi in Chamonix, France, is conveyed by the stick-like figures navigating the ridge. The cold and exposure must have been challenging for Ron, but he rose to the occasion magnificently.

14 Sirsenu Gayen India 17pts

Nikon D610, 50mm, 1/40sec at f/1.8, ISO 1600

Unsurprisingly, Sirsendu needed to use a high ISO to capture this shot of a boy lighting candles in Laos. The balls of light created by the flickering candles behind him provide a lovely sense of his surroundings.

8**9****12****8 Jim Cumming Canada 23pts**

Canon EOS 7D Mark II, 300mm, 1/3200sec at f/3.5, ISO 320

Jim laid down on the ice and waited for the snowy owl to get ready for take-off before releasing the shutter. It must have been cold and uncomfortable, but his patience paid off.

9 Dave Balcombe UK 22pts

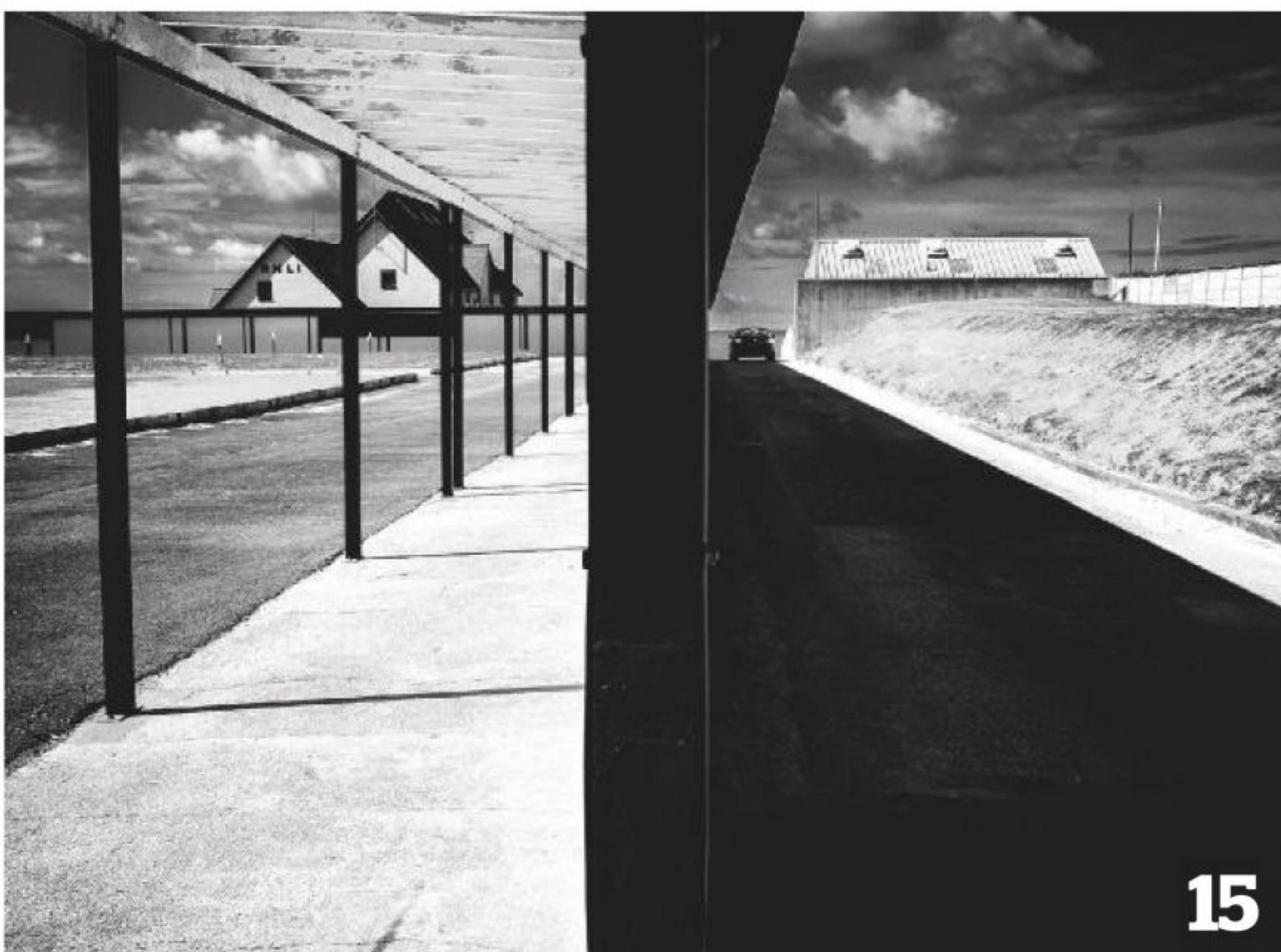
Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mk II, 12-60mm, 1/10sec at f/9.5, ISO 500

There is an appealing quietness to this picture. The exposure is spot on, and the sliver of wall on the left of the frame is crucial to the composition.

12 Steve Baker UK 19pts

Sony ILCE-7M2, 55mm, 1/100sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Steve is lucky enough to visit Gambia every year on charitable trips. He took this image in the village of Geniere where, due to the harsh sunlight, he was forced to seek shade from the fierce heat and light.

**13****Steve Cheetham UK Opts**

Canon EOS 5DS R, 24-70mm, 60sec at f/11, ISO 100

There are a number of huts around the Venetian Lagoon in Italy and Steve made a special trip to capture them.

15**15 Neil Johansson UK 16pts**

Fujifilm X30, 28-112mm 1/950sec at f/5, ISO 200

This is an image of contrasts: light and dark, black and white, left and right. The shapes created by the pillars and the buildings add another point of interest.

16 Pete Rowbottom UK 15pts

Nikon D750, 16-35mm, 89sec at f/14, ISO 100

The rain stopped for a few minutes, allowing Pete to capture this long-exposure shot of the harbour at St Monans in Fife.

APOY 2018

17**17** Daniel Goody UK 14pts

Canon EOS 500D, 17-50mm, 1/320sec at f/2.8, ISO 100

Daniel had to wait for a suitable subject to walk past, and take care not to let the black guttering touch his head.

**18****18** Millie Turner UK 13pts

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 24-70mm, 1/25sec at f/13, ISO 200

Millie was in Kandersteg, Switzerland, when she took this shot. The skiers, mist and mountains all work in unison.

22 Eric Falk USA 9pts

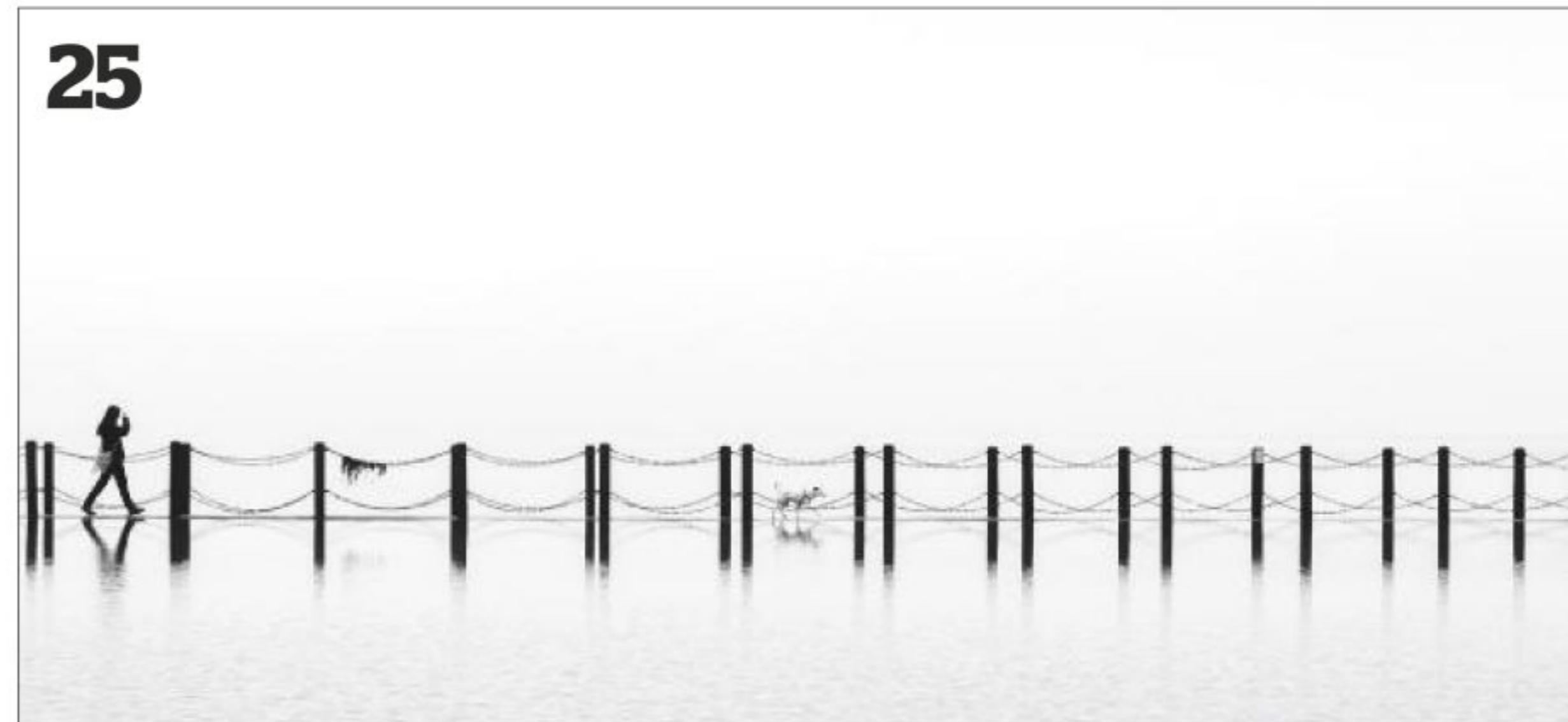
Nikon D5100, 35mm, 1/40sec at f/7.1, ISO 320

There seem to be three stories in progress in this picture, perfectly separated by the archways: the dancer, the lady and her dog, and the couple.

21**21** Tony Cook UK 10pts

Fujifilm X100T, 23mm, 1/50sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

You can almost hear the sound of the piano coming from this image due to the man's concentrated expression.

22**25****25** Sarah Murrell UK 6pts

Nikon D7000, 18-200mm, 1/500sec at f/9, ISO 200

The extreme contrast in this picture works brilliantly, reducing the scene to its core elements: water, sky, posts, figure (and dog, of course).

29 David Iain UK 2pts

Nikon D810, 24-70mm, 1sec at f/10, ISO 1000

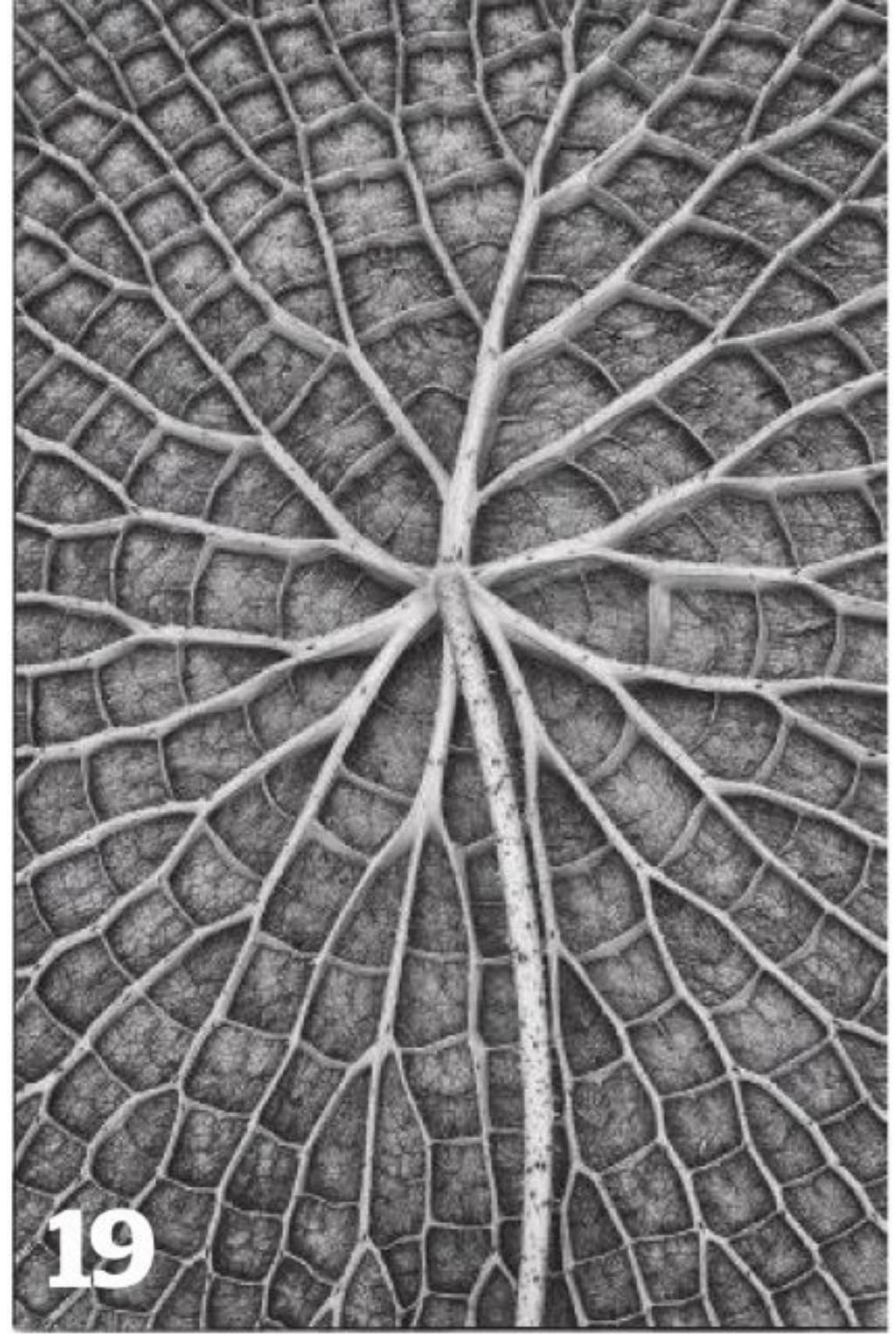
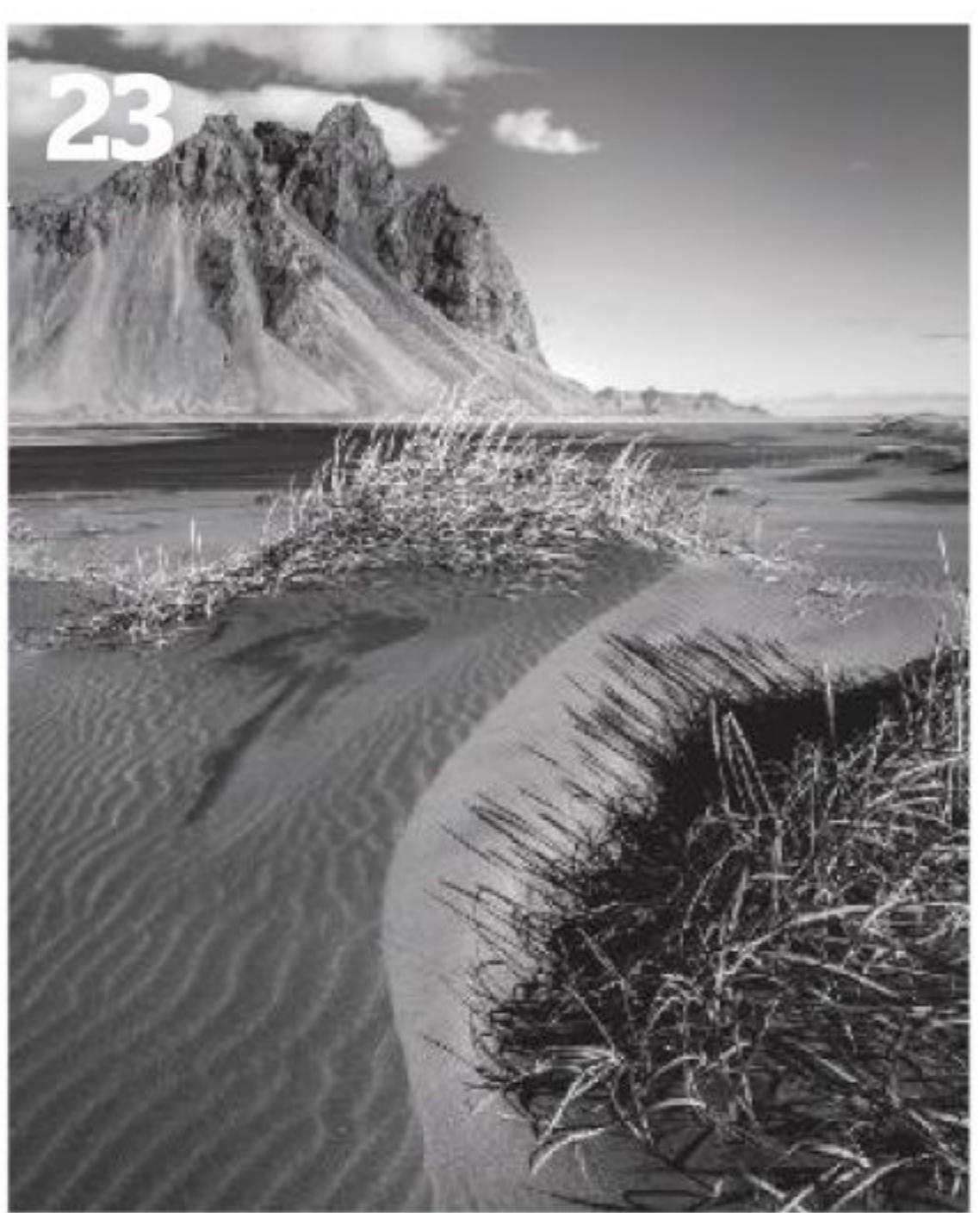
This picture has all the atmosphere of the film *Brief Encounter*. The low light forced David to use a relatively high ISO, but it was worth the risk.

28**28** Vlad Sidorak Russia 3pts

Panasonic DMC-G5, 45mm, 1/100sec at f/1.8, ISO 200

This study of stripes screams to be converted to black & white. The shot was taken on the Moscow underground.

29

**19****23 Laurie Brett UK 8pts**

Fujifilm X-T2, 10-24mm, 1/250sec at f/11, ISO 200

Laurie spent an hour exploring the dunes before settling on this viewpoint of Vestrahorn near Stokksnes in Iceland. The shadows produced by the low sun are striking, while the aperture (f/11) ensures front-to-back sharpness.

27 Allan Masson UK 4pts

Sony ILCE-7M2, 24-240mm, 1/10sec at f/11, ISO 100

Allan took a series of portrait-format shots of the bandstand in Duthie Park, Aberdeen, and stitched them together in Lightroom.

**30 Marco Tagliarino Italy 1pt**

Canon EOS 6D, 70-200mm, 1/320sec at f/2.8, ISO 200

This is a well-observed image, with every scuff, mark and patch of dirt revealed. There is just enough of the monk visible beneath the bench.

19 Jonathan Evans UK 12pts
 Sony NEX-7, 18-55mm, 1/40sec at f/9, ISO 200
 The venation of this waterlily is striking, radiating out from the centre. The shot is effective due to its simplicity, and the high level of detail. Jonathan used an aperture of f/9 to keep everything nice and sharp.

20 Rob Deyes UK 11pts
 Sony ILCE-7, exposure unknown, ISO 400
 Silhouettes can be very effective when the outline of figures is clear, as in this image. There is good visual separation between the mother and child, and the water spurting up gives a sense of fun.

24 Richard Hooper UK 7pts
 Canon EOS 400D, 24-105mm, 1/320sec at f/14, ISO 200
 The majestic mountains give us a clear sense of place here. The shot was taken in the village of Kandersteg in Switzerland. The main challenge for Richard was controlling the contrast.

**26****John Bull UK 5pts**

Canon EOS 7D, 10-20mm, 1/320sec at f/4.5, ISO 1000

The Tate Modern is an extremely photogenic building, and John has done well to find a viewpoint that offers something different.

27

The 2018 leaderboard

Dave Balcombe takes top spot after scoring 22 points in this round. Richard Whitson also scored highly with 20 points and knocks Neil Burnell into 3rd place. Steve Cheetham has two images in the top 30 of this round but only his highest-scoring image counts.

1	Dave Balcombe	45pts	6	Steve Cheetham	30pts
2	Richard Whitson	38pts	7	Pawel Zygmunt	30pts
3	Neil Burnell	37pts	8	Chris Martin	30pts
4	Howard Mason	36pts	9	Alexandrino Lei Aiorosa	29pts
5	Sirsendu Gayen	31pts	10	Steve Banner	29pts

To enter and find details of the upcoming rounds of APOY 2018 visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/apoy and click Enter Now

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LETTER OF THE WEEK



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In the club

This letter is the culmination of an until now, ongoing thread of correspondence which started with my letter to *Tech Talk* published in AP 26 May regarding the use of printer profiles. Gerald Peppiatt kindly responded to *Inbox* (AP 30 June) advising of similar problems that he had and highlighting the benefits of using Epson Easy Print, rather than Photoshop, to print with Epson printers. All this is a rather protracted introduction to note that, having taken Gerald's advice, I have now produced a number of very impressive prints (including this image above), for which I would like to thank both him and *Tech Talk*. There has been much talk recently, within your pages, of the benefits of belonging to a photography club, and I indeed would recognise this. However, this little episode has highlighted to me that being a subscriber to AP has very similar advantages.

It says much that one can raise a technical question with a magazine such as yours and, thereafter, receive good, sound advice, based on true experience both from your team and from other members of the AP club. If you have a spare memory card going, I think that Gerald might well warrant a gift for furthering the reputation of your fine magazine.

Glyn Hopping

We're glad your problem got resolved. We will dig out Gerald's contact details and send him the memory card as you requested – Nigel Atherton, editor

Win!

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Just say... OM

Thank you so much for your piece on Olympus OM film cameras (*Film Stars*, 14 July issue). My first 'proper' camera was an OM10: at £110 it was a very generous 18th birthday present. It was so well designed it immediately became an extension of my eye and mind; I could shove it in any old bag; the kit lens was a fast 50mm Zuiko prime which taught me my craft. Along with a 28-70mm zoom, the OM10 was my faithful workhorse for 20 years, all the way to an A Level in Photography. Then I lost my darkroom, tried to go digital with a great lump of a Nikon DSLR, got entangled in early Photoshop, and all but gave up photography altogether. Only in Lightroom did I find a program that does what I want with minimum fuss; then I got my hands on an OM-D E-M10, and at last I'm back where I want to be: where the kit never gets in the way of the vision. I'm about to move house and get rid of most of my old kit, but the OM10 is coming with me.

Emma Darwin

I also own a digital OM-D and the older OM film version, and you are right, they are great value cameras and lenses

– Geoff Harris, deputy editor

French leave

I suspect this will be one of the oddest letters you have ever received but I am prompted to write it because of your 'Back in the Day' section in *7days*. In the late 1960s – say around 1966 or 1968 – some friends and I went on a day trip to Paris organised by AP and run by the late lamented Clarksons Travel. Most of the day is a hazy memory but one event, which happened on our return to a French airport, has always stuck in my mind. A young couple had taken their elderly next-door neighbour as a treat but had lost her in Paris. We eventually had to take off without her. Do your archives record what happened to her? I would love to know. As I approach my 80s, it is something that has always intrigued me.

Mrs J Merryweather

What a great letter. While AP has always prided itself on its news-gathering ability, the time constraints

of producing a weekly magazine also mean we focus on photography-related stories rather than neighbours who went AWOL across the water, so I'm afraid we can't help with this one. Here's hoping no news is good news (according to our archives) and she got back OK. Maybe if the 'young couple' are still reading AP, they will be able to update everyone. We wait with bated breath! – Geoff Harris, deputy editor

No Flickr

I always like the *Online picture of the week*. You say Flickr is included in your search, and if I am understanding this correctly, I have noticed that you rarely select a picture from Flickr (well, I can't remember seeing one). The pictures usually say 'uploaded to our Twitter page'. On Flickr I can see plenty of fine recent pictures that use the #appicoftheweek hashtag. Could you please clarify whether you do consider Flickr or not, or is it that we Flickr users are not trying hard enough?

Thanks for allowing Panasonic to run its advertorial about their photography events in your magazine – I attended the Bodiam Castle one and it was excellent – the staff were friendly, very knowledgeable, and thankfully there was no sales pitch. You could try any camera/lens you wanted and actually keep the memory card, thus enabling you to take the same picture with your existing camera then go home and compare the results. As a consequence, I bought a TZ100 camera as my portable pocket camera based on the knowledge I was not sacrificing picture quality compared to my D7200.

Derek Cottrell

We certainly have no beef with Flickr users so your letter has reminded us to keep looking on there for great pictures (of which there are many). Glad you enjoyed the Panasonic



Derek is happy that he bought a TZ100



Richard Cowley spotted that this is not the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral

© ELIZABETH TRUSS

event, too – Geoff Harris, deputy editor

Elements again

I would support the comments of Andrew Herbert (*Inbox*, 21 July) regarding Photoshop Elements. I was interested in a number of techniques covered in recent issues but found that they used features not available in Elements. I would particularly like a version of how to do HDR in PSE. I endorse his idea of 'And now here is how it can be done in Elements'.

Keith Ratcliffe

We have received several letters asking for editing tutorials to be shown using various different software applications. It's impossible to cover them all so we tend to favour the ones that the maximum number of people will benefit from. In our last reader survey only 11% said they use applications other than Adobe. Of the 89% of Adobe users, around half used various versions of Photoshop, a third used Lightroom and about 20% used Elements. We're going to be running another survey shortly to see if this breakdown has changed much in the past couple of years – Nigel Atherton, editor

HP sauce

With reference to your article *The eyes have it* about the MPs' All Party Parliamentary Photography Competition (AP, 14 July), I think the eyes of Elizabeth Truss MP definitely do not have it. Her photograph purports to be Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. I don't know where that cathedral is, but it definitely is not in Liverpool. I admit that her image does have a passing resemblance to the Liverpool cathedral (or the

'Mersey Funnel' as it is sometimes known), but I think the best that can be said is 'close, but no cigar'. Nice picture though.

Richard Cowley

Sorry, that was my fault. There was no caption for this image so I guessed at Liverpool, meant to check later, then got distracted by the office biscuits. It is in fact the Cathedral of Brasília in Brazil – Nigel Atherton, editor

What a pen and ink...

I recently purchased an Epson XP 15000 A3+ printer and the quality of the prints is outstanding. However, the stingy starter pack of set-up cartridges ran out in no time at all, so I thought I'd buy Extra Large cartridges. Yet these are barely two inches long. A set of six 'XL' replacements set me back £112, which is almost half of what I paid for the printer. There are rip-offs in every walk of life. But for me, printer manufacturers who price their inks as though the tanks contained liquid platinum are some of the worst offenders. There are many online forums speaking out against the price of original inks so there are clearly many aggrieved photographers who feel the same as I do. Isn't it time that a representative from Epson, Canon or whoever spoke to the photo press to defend the extortionate cost of their inks?

They're promoting the pleasure of home printing while scaring off would-be customers with the high cost of maintaining the hobby. A photo club friend of mine warned me that home printing of photos was grossly expensive. She's never spoken a truer word.

Sarah Osborne

We have passed your comments on to Epson, Sarah, and will share their response – Geoff Harris, deputy editor

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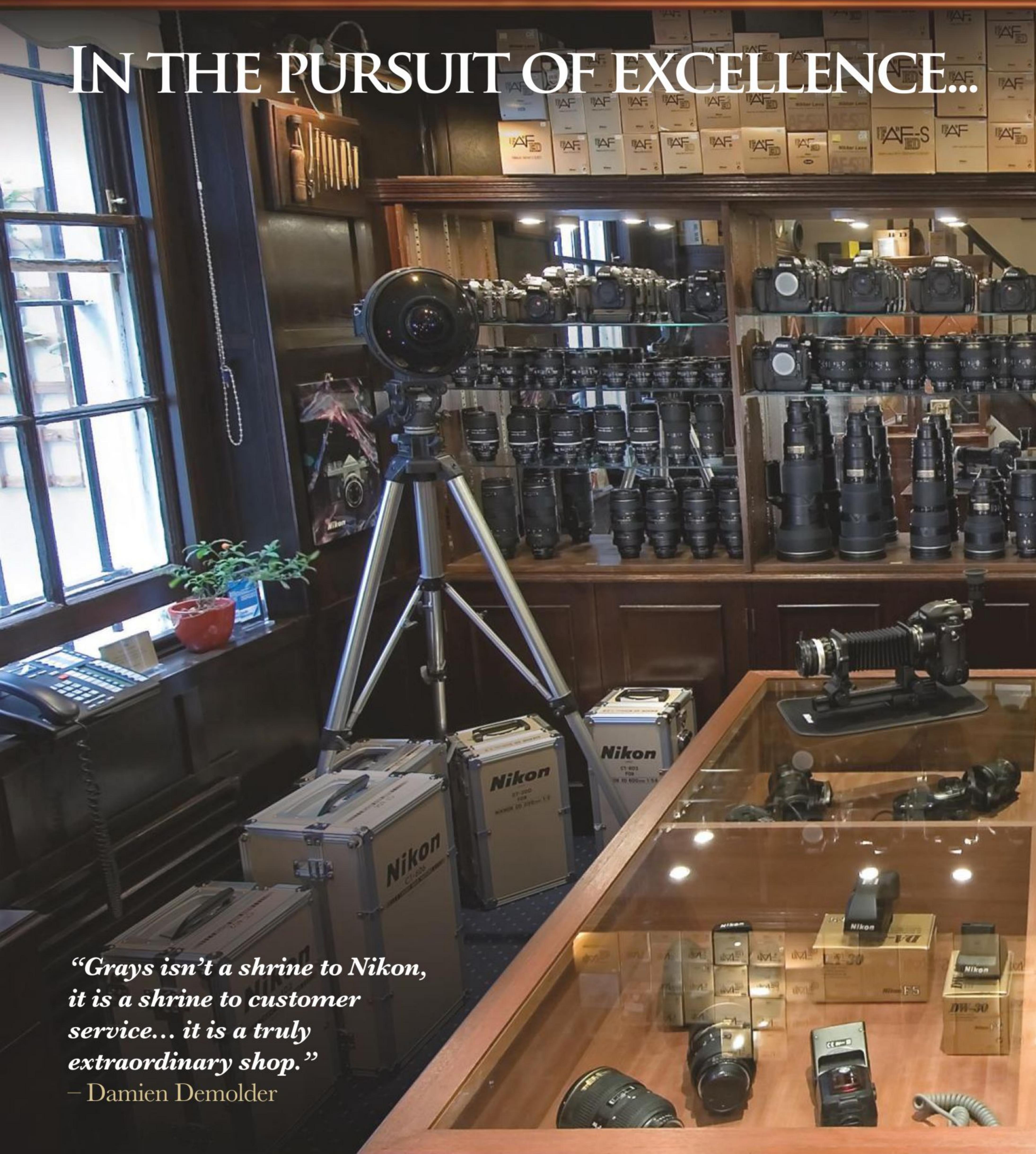
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KIT LIST**► Nikon D700**

Long-since superseded but this is still Emma's favourite camera. 'I still love the look I get from the 12MP full-frame sensor.'

**▼ Kit zoom 24-70mm f/2.8**

A good general-purpose lens is good for full-length shots at the wide end, and portraits at the tele end.

**► Fast prime lenses****50mm f/1.4**

Emma's favourite lenses for boudoir are her 50mm and 85mm f/1.4 primes. 'I prefer primes and like to shoot wide open to get a much more creative look.'

**► Rotolight AEOS**

I much prefer constant lighting because you can see the effect with your eye. The Rotolight AEOS is powerful yet still portable.

**► Rotolight NEO 2**

The NEO 2 is a mini version of the AEOS that can be handheld or attached to a hotshoe.

**Emma Joanne**

Emma is a professional Events, Weddings and Boudoir Photographer based in Brighton, Sussex, but she travels nationwide and internationally for her clients. You can view more of Emma's work on her website, www.shotgunweddings.co

Model: Angel White - www.angelwhite.net

Hair and make-up: Stacie Smith - www.stacie-laura-smith.uk

Location: Hotel Pelirocco, Brighton UK - www.hotelpelirocco.co.uk

The art of seduction

Boudoir has become one of the fastest growing areas of photography in recent years. AP went on a shoot in Brighton to find out how to do it well

Unlike the cheesy glamour photos that once dominated lads' mags (and AP), boudoir photography is more romantic and is aimed mainly at a female audience – indeed the vast majority of boudoir is commissioned by the subjects, often as part of a bridal photography package, or for a landmark birthday, or as a gift for a partner. Many women choose a boudoir shoot as a confidence boost after having children, getting divorced or losing weight.

Boudoir photography is generally shot in a bedroom setting – hence the name – and is sensual and sexy without being explicit. The subject's modesty is generally covered by lingerie or bedding, and artful posing.

Most successful boudoir photographers are women, for obvious reasons, so male photographers hoping to succeed in this genre should consider a female assistant to help out with lighting, hair and make-up, posing and costume changes, but most importantly for the subject's reassurance.

We teamed up with Brighton-based photographer Emma Joanne for a boudoir shoot at the Hotel Pelirocco, to learn how to succeed in this challenging genre.

Look for interesting locations

'When I'm choosing locations I tend to go for themed hotels where the decor is different in each room, and where you can style the client to complement the theme. This offers a much greater variety of pictures and fires my imagination,' says Emma. 'One of the things I like about Hotel Pelirocco is that the rooms are like sets. There are lots of props and details to play with, like ornate dressing tables. I find that with anyone, whether they're a seasoned model or not, if you give them

something to do it looks far more natural and takes away the whole idea that they're being photographed.'

Before you even so much as remove the lens cap, the model will need make-up and hair done, ideally by a professional, so that she looks her best. For this shoot Emma brought along Stacie Smith, who she has worked with before. Our model, Angel, will be familiar to regular readers – she has been on our cover before.

Meanwhile you first need to clear the set. 'Go around the room and remove anything incongruous that you will curse about later if you see it in the background,' says Emma. 'This includes kettles and cups, luggage stands, and even the TV – if it is on a stand and can be moved safely.'

The model should have brought along a selection of lingerie in different colours and styles. If you haven't already worked out in advance which colours complement the décor of your room, now is the time.

Lighting the set

Next you need to light the set. Our hotel rooms have large picture windows that fill the rooms with daylight, but in many cases will be behind the model. While this creates a nice rim light you'll need strong



Hair and make-up artist Stacie Smith at work on Angel

Technique

'When working with your model, suggestive posing and eye contact are sexy, so try different looks with this in mind,' says Emma
Nikon D600, 1/250sec at f/2.8, ISO 200



Technique BOUDOIR

frontal lighting to balance with the light behind. For this shoot Emma used Rotolight AEOS and NEO 2 LED lights, which she prefers over flash heads.

'You need to work quickly with boudoir,' explains Emma. 'You can't keep the model waiting while you fiddle with the lights or you'll lose the energy of the shoot. With these continuous lights you can see how the light is falling, and balance it with the ambient light by eye. You can even change the colour balance. They have a flash mode as well if I ever need the extra power.'

During the shoot

When your subject is ready to start the shoot, ease in slowly. You should have a list of at least a few poses you want to try first.

'Professional models will help suggest poses,' says Emma. 'but with ladies who haven't done this before you'll need to direct them. You must make them feel comfortable, offer lots of encouragement and help them to enjoy the session.'

Watch for reflections of the lights in mirrors and pictures, and if shooting with a wideangle keep the model in the middle of the frame to avoid distorting them.

Take plenty of breaks and once you feel you have exhausted one part of the room move on to another. 'If you're going to be selling images to your clients you want them to have as much variety as possible,' advises Emma. In our first room alone Emma used the dressing table, the bed, the chaise longue and a screen as props.

Emma has a final piece of advice for anyone interested in trying this genre of photography: 'One thing about boudoir is that there is a lot of expectation, and depending how good your pictures are you can either boost someone's confidence entirely, or do the complete opposite and destroy it.'

AP



POSING AND SHOOTING TIPS



Have an assistant

It's useful to have someone on hand to look out for unflattering creases, hairs out of place and other things you may not spot. They can also help adjust, move or hold the lighting. If you're a male photographer the assistant should be female – perhaps the make-up artist, so they can also apply touch ups if needed.



away from the camera. Shoot from low down with a wideangle to make the legs look longer. If you shoot from head height they'll look stumpy.

Standing poses

You always want a bend on the leg nearest the camera as it creates a nice curve and elongates the leg. The weight should be on the back leg, because if you put your weight on the inside leg it will thicken that hip and we want to make it look as slender as possible. Turn the bent knee



Bend it

In boudoir the model should overemphasise every pose, so remind her regularly to keep her chin up, shoulders back and tummy in, because it pushes out the bust and creates a more sexy and elegant pose. Basically whatever can bend needs to bend – you don't want to see any limbs looking lifeless.



'Always style your model in context, to complement the backdrop or interior of the room. This will result in a more artistic final image.'

Nikon D700, 1/160sec at f/2.8, ISO 320

10 top tips for boudoir photography

1 Location

Hotels are great locations to shoot boudoir, but look for somewhere that gives you more creative options than just white walls and linen.

2 De-clutter

The first thing to do before you introduce the model is de-clutter the room. Hide the kettle and cups, and avoid the TV in shot.

3 Clothing

Make sure the model has a collection of different lingerie in a variety of styles/colours so that you can pick outfits to complement the room décor.

4 Hair/make-up

Good make-up is vital for successful boudoir photography. If possible hire a professional, or ask a friend who is skilled in this area.

5 Props

Use props such as a phone, hairbrush or lipstick. Giving them something to do helps provide a distraction for your model and helps them forget they're being photographed.

6 Lighting

I prefer constant LED lights, like the Rotolight, because I

can adjust the brightness by eye and see exactly where the shadows fall before pressing the shutter. It means I can work more quickly and not keep the model waiting.

7 Start off slow

If you're working with someone inexperienced start them off in a dressing gown – something sexy but not too exposed to start with. You can reveal more as their confidence grows.

8 Communicate

Offer lots of encouragement and praise during the shoot to boost their confidence, as it can be intimidating.

9 Be open

Although you should come to the shoot with some ideas already, don't rigidly work to a checklist. Keep your mind open to your environment and let that give you ideas you may not have thought of.

10 Inspiration

Look at existing boudoir photography online for ideas. Save images that inspire you to a Pinterest board, or make an album on your phone so you can refer to it during the shoot if you get stuck for ideas.

Seated models

With any model, whatever their size, when you're seating them it's best to ask them to put just the edge of their bum on the seat, and edge as far forward as possible with their weight on just their rear buttock, rather than having them rest their entire weight on both buttocks, which is going to look very unflattering.



Lying on the bed

When shooting on a bed the model is going to be lying flat – either on her front or her back – which means that her body is going to relax into the bed. You need to watch for any creases going on, which you can iron out with a change of position. With bigger ladies this will take more work to conceal.



Concealment

If your model has a part of their body that they are self-conscious about (such as their legs or tummy) try getting them to hold a carefully placed cushion, pillow, towel or bed-sheet in front of them to conceal it. Alternatively shoot from an angle that doesn't show that part of her body.



BEHIND THE SCENES Studland Bay

Tracy Calder joined the Panasonic LUMIX Roadshow, in partnership with the National Trust, at Studland Bay last month, and saw how readers got on using LUMIX cameras

Studland Bay is popular with holidaymakers and reptiles in almost equal measure, so it was no surprise to see a grass snake slithering across the path, metres away from the Discovery Centre where the Panasonic LUMIX team had set up for the weekend. This popular event provided a chance for visitors to attend a photo walk, try out some of the LUMIX gear, and seek advice from the Panasonic team (including professional photographer Esther Ling).

Despite the threat of rain, the photo walk was well attended, and Esther provided plenty of guidance, including how to use lead-in lines to direct the viewer's eye into the picture. The group was quick to put this into action using the ropes and paths leading up to the beach huts. Attendees were then free to take the cameras off into the dunes for a few hours before returning to report back on their experiences. Here, five participants share a few of the pictures they took on the day.



Pro photographer Esther Ling shows some of the LUMIX camera's features to the group

READERS' LUMIX IMAGES



Mark Arnold

Camera used: Panasonic LUMIX DC-GX9 with LUMIX G Vario 12-60mm lens

 It was very interesting to get advice from the professionals. I used the DC-GX9, which I found to be a very capable camera – considerably better than my own DSLR. I especially liked the touch focus and shoot function of the LCD screen, and I can see how the 4K shooting would be fantastic for fast-moving children! Joshua, the LUMIX Imaging Expert, was able to provide assistance and help me get the most from the equipment.



Bill Arnold

Camera used: Panasonic LUMIX DC-GX9 with 14-42mm lens

 My photography skills are quite poor, so I learnt a lot from our guide, Esther. I very much like the fact that the LUMIX cameras are lighter than a DSLR. I was also impressed with the 4K function. I learnt how to use the screen to select a focus position and also more about the 4K feature from the Panasonic expert. It was fantastic that we were able to select any camera from the range to borrow for several hours.



Gareth Abbott

Camera used: Panasonic LUMIX DC-GX9 with Leica DG 12-60mm lens

 The roadshow was a chance for me to get my hands on some LUMIX gear. I chose to borrow a DC-GX9 with Leica 12-60mm lens. I loved the electronic viewfinder and, as someone who wears

Derek Potter

Camera used: Panasonic LUMIX DMC-FZ330 with 25-600mm Leica DC lens

 I borrowed a bridge camera (the DMC-FZ330) so I could zoom up to 600mm – I wanted to see the difference between this and my usual set-up (a Canon EOS 7D with 70-300mm lens). It took me a while to adjust, but I soon got the hang of it. The multitude of features 'sold' me on this model, but I wish I had tried a mirrorless camera, too. Once I have saved up enough pennies, I think my next camera will be a Panasonic LUMIX. All in all, it was a pleasant morning and the staff were very accommodating and knowledgeable.



glasses, I liked the resizing button. It felt good in the hand, and I'm sure a battery grip would make it perfect for me. The shutter button is on a hair trigger. If there was a way to take the edge off that, it would be better for me. I was expecting to be able to use the flip-out screen, and then use the EVF seamlessly. There must be a way to set that up so it happens automatically.



Lauren Abbott

Camera used: Panasonic LUMIX DC-GH5 with Leica DG 12-60mm lens

 I attended the roadshow with the intention of having a nice day out with my father, and to test the new lenses and cameras Panasonic had to offer. Little did I know I would be leaving there having ordered my very own GH5 and lens! I chose to use the GH5 as I am into videography and have heard amazing things about it from other videographers. I wasn't disappointed. I already have a GX7, so I was familiar with some of the settings, although there are a lot more features on the GH5, so I'll definitely need to spend some time playing around with it. I'm so glad I came to the roadshow.

Esther Ling's top tips



Esther Ling is a professional photographer and LUMIX Ambassador whose main passions are

social, documentary, food and travel photography. Her camera of choice is the Panasonic LUMIX G7. Here, she shares her tips for those who are new to the range. www.estherling.co.uk.

1 If you're nervous about taking the camera off auto, don't worry – treat it as a positive instead. Using auto allows you to concentrate on other things, such as composition. If you have an eye for a picture, you're lucky; so don't be afraid to use auto as you build up your confidence.

2 Keep it simple. People have a habit of overcomplicating things: they take an image and crop it, but why not move your feet instead? Another mistake people make is to over-process their files. If I'm doing something in Lightroom, I keep the original up on screen – that way I don't lose sight of where I started.

3 Since I moved over to Panasonic, I have been taking more photographs. My previous gear was so heavy, I didn't take it out unless I was working. But the cameras I use now feel right, and everything is just a touch of a button away.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Panasonic LUMIX Roadshow, in partnership with the National Trust, will continue to tour various scenic locations this year (see below), and AP will be featuring articles with tips and techniques for capturing them at their best. See www.nationaltrust.org.uk/panasonic-roadshows.

Mount Stewart, Northern Ireland, 18/19 August; Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland, 1/2 September; Dunham Massey, Cheshire, 8/9 September.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



Brighton breezy

Fifteen AP readers recently spent a glorious day in Brighton with **Olympus**, road testing the latest kit. Here's how they got on

Last month AP gave a second group of readers the chance to try out the latest Olympus kit on a walk around Brighton. AP Editor and local resident Nigel Atherton was the host for the day, accompanied by

Olympus's team of technical experts. Here's a selection of the superb pictures taken during the day, along with a few thoughts about the Olympus system. To find out about switching to mirrorless visit www.itsnotyouitsme.co.uk

Hemant Jariwala

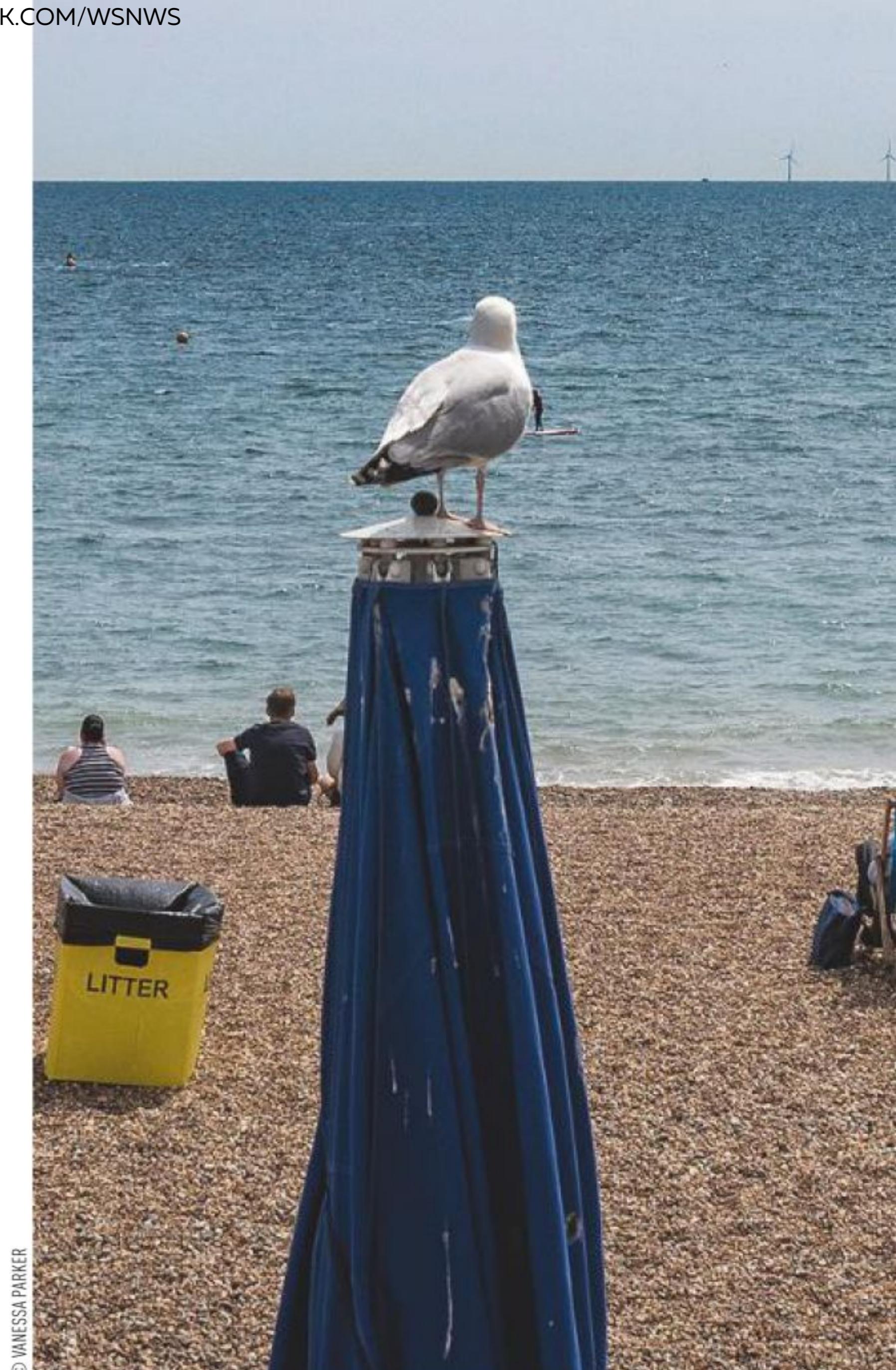
Current cameras: Sony Alpha 7, Fujifilm X70

 I used the Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II with 7-14mm 1:2.8 PRO lens – a combination that suited my style of 'ultra wideangle' photography. I found that the lens had exceptional handling and very sharp image delivery when examining the raw files. However, I am not used to so many dials on the camera, which I continually touched, displaying lots of random options! But overall I was very impressed with the Olympus gear and the quality of images delivered by the Four Thirds sensor-and-lens combination. If I was in the market for a digital camera system, Olympus would certainly rate highly.

Backlit deckchairs on the beach
Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II, 7-14mm lens at
14mm, 1/1000sec at f/14, ISO 200



© HEMANT JARIWALA



© VANESSA PARKER

Vanessa Parker

Current camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark III

 I borrowed an OM-D E-M5 Mark II with a 25mm f/1.2 Pro lens. I quickly managed to customise it for my preferred way of shooting – these cameras are infinitely customisable so I felt at home with it almost straight away. I shot a variety of subjects to test the image stabilisation in both the camera and the lens – they are both a joy to use. The camera is ideal for street photography as it is discreet and unobtrusive. The tilting LCD screen allowed me to 'shoot from the hip' without drawing attention – perfect for candids. Coming from a full-frame Canon it was a pleasure to carry this for the day.



© PAM BROOM

Pam Broom

Current camera: Olympus Pen E-P3

I used a Pen-F with a 12mm lens. It's a great size to stick in a coat pocket or small bag. Small enough that people don't really notice it, so great for sneaky candids, especially when there is no shutter sound either. The attached grip made it a bit heavier, but felt better in the hand. There are lots of customisation options and having the dial on the front to switch quickly between colour, black & white and art effects was handy. The viewfinder was great and was a godsend on the day as the weather was so bright it was difficult to see the rear screen.





A seagull surveys the beach, as well as the wind farm on the horizon
Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II, 25mm lens, 1/4000 at f/4, ISO 250



Not your average wedding photo!
Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II, 12-40mm lens, 1/500sec at f/8, ISO 200



A visitor surveys the ruins of the West Pier
Olympus Pen-F, 12mm lens, 1/1600 at f/5, ISO 250

Simon Buckton
Current camera: Canon EOS 5D Mark II
I used an Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II with a 12-40mm lens and really enjoyed it. I mainly shoot film or on an old Canon, so the sheer amount of menu options had me stumped for a few minutes. But once I'd set it up to shoot at a low ISO with aperture priority, I enjoyed using it. The JPEGs were superb, with great colour and detail. It was my first time using a mirrorless camera – the electronic viewfinder was no problem at all.

Billy Rae Cawte
Current camera: Sony Alpha 7S II
I struggle to carry big kit due to having fibromyalgia and hypermobility syndrome, which makes the Olympus Pen-F with the 17mm f/1.8 lens perfect for me. I like the fact it's a beautiful camera that's also discreet. It's easy to operate – lots of buttons make it simple to adjust settings. The menu takes a bit of getting used to as some of the usual terms are different but I quickly picked it up. The start-up time from sleep mode is incredibly quick – by the time I'd half pressed the shutter the camera was awake and ready to shoot. The EVF is also beautiful – very clear even on a bright day. It felt like I was using an optical viewfinder but with all the additional info that an EVF offers. Despite having a smaller sensor the files were a pleasure to work with.

Steve Malone

Current camera: Sony Alpha 7R III

There's a lot to like about the Pen-F. Aesthetically it looks the part, with a quality, all-metal body and a solid feel. I liked the articulating screen, which folds in on itself to protect it from scratches when in your pocket. The 17mm f/1.8 was a great general-purpose lens – sharp, fast to focus and silent. The Pen-F's compact form factor was great for candid shots, especially using silent shutter mode. The camera produced good colour JPEGs straight out of the camera, and the raw files provided plenty of latitude for painless editing. My only criticisms were that the rear screen was difficult to see in very bright sunlight, and the body isn't weather-sealed. But I really enjoyed using it and didn't want to hand it back at the end of the day.



© STEVE MALONE
A nice portrait of a lifeguard on Brighton beach
Olympus Pen-F, 17mm lens, 1/1000sec at f/9, ISO 400

A nicely observed juxtaposition between the seagull and the sign
Olympus Pen-F, 17mm lens, 1/1000 at f/7.1, ISO 200



At a glance

£1,150

- 24-200mm equivalent, f/2.8-4.5 lens
- 20MP 1in sensor
- Pop-up electronic viewfinder
- Tilting touchscreen LCD
- 24fps shooting
- 4K video recording



Sony Cyber-shot RX100 VI

Sony's pocket travel zoom is a technological marvel, says **Andy Westlake**, but its flawed handling is disappointing for the price

For and against

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Impressive lens gives sharp images all through its really useful zoom range + Very good image quality with reliable exposure and white balance + Remarkably fast autofocus and continuous shooting means you should never miss a shot + Pop-up viewfinder and tilting screen give flexible compositional options - Tiny buttons and flawed operational logic make for slow and frustrating operation - Awful battery life, compounded by poor default power-saving settings - Small, slippery body is far too easy to drop without an accessory grip 	<p>All prices are approximate street prices</p>
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Data file

Price	£1,150
Sensor	20.1MP, 1in Exmor RS CMOS
Output size	5472x3648
Focal length mag	2.7x
Lens	24-200mm equiv f/2.8-4.5
Shutter speeds	30-1/32,000sec
Sensitivity	ISO 125-12,800
Exposure modes	Auto, PASM, Scene, Panorama, Movie, High Frame-Rate
Metering	Multi, Centre weighted, Spot, Average, Highlight
Exposure comp	+/-3EV, 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	24fps
Screen	3in 921,600-dot tilting touchscreen
Viewfinder	2.36m-dot OLED
AF points	315 PDAF, 24 CDAF
Video	3840 x 2160, 25fps
External mic	No
Memory card	SD / SDXC / SDHC
Power	NP-BX1 Li-ion
Battery life	240 (LCD), 220 (EVF)
Dimensions	101.6x58.1x42.8 mm
Weight	301g

When Sony released the original RX100 back in 2012, it revolutionised the pocket camera at a stroke. With its 20MP 1in-type sensor giving vastly better image quality than the tiny sensors previously used in this type of camera, it made the competition obsolete overnight. Successive RX100 generations have maintained Sony's technological lead, but the cost has also shot up along the way. Sony's solution has been to keep every model on the market at tiered price points.

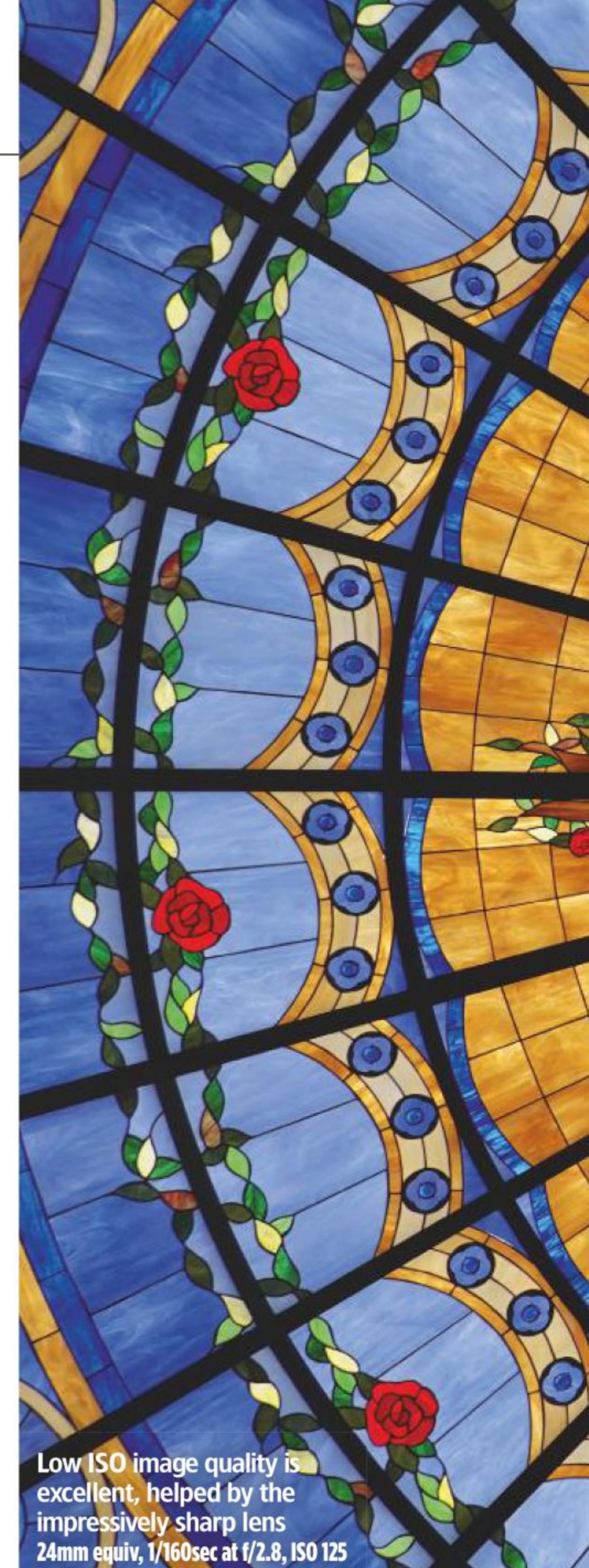
Now, with the RX100 VI, Sony has made perhaps its most significant change yet. In place of the 24-70mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 zoom used by the previous three generations, it has added a considerably longer 24-200mm equivalent lens, albeit with a smaller maximum aperture of f/2.8-4.5. Impressively, it's done

so while retaining almost the same small body size – the lens barrel is just 1.8mm longer. In the process it has made the first true competitor to Panasonic's TZ100 and TZ200 premium travel zoom cameras.

The catch is the price. At a staggering £1,150, the RX100 VI is £300 more than the TZ200, which we already considered very expensive for this kind of camera, and more than twice the price of the TZ100. This is a huge premium to pay for its compact size and high-speed shooting capability, especially considering that the RX100 VI retains many of the same operational and handling flaws as its predecessors.

Features

In essence, the RX100 VI has all the same core features as the previous model, just with a new lens. So it's based around a 20-million-pixel 1in type sensor that employs Sony's exclusive



Low ISO image quality is excellent, helped by the impressively sharp lens
24mm equiv, 1/160sec at f/2.8, ISO 125



stacked CMOS design. This uses back-illumination technology for reduced noise, while sandwiching a secondary RAM chip onto the sensor for faster readout speeds. The sensitivity range is ISO 125-12,800, which is pretty much standard for this sensor size.

Sony has used the same high-powered Bionz X processor as in its professional Alpha 9, backed up by a front-end LSI that enables fast data throughput. This results in a continuous shooting rate of 24 frames per second at full resolution, with a 233-shot JPEG buffer, while continuously adjusting focus and exposure between frames. Just how many photographers will need this capability on a pocket compact is another question.

The lens may be shorter than either the TZ100's 25-250mm or TZ200's 24-360mm equivalent optics, but it has the advantage of a usefully faster aperture at the

long end, at f/4.5 compared to f/5.9 or f/6.4 respectively. Crucially, this means it should be less affected by the resolution-sapping effects of diffraction, so should give sharper results at telephoto. Low-light shooters would probably still do better to stick to the RX100 V and its shorter-but-faster f/1.8-2.8 zoom, while videographers will be disappointed by the lack of a built-in ND filter. However photographers who like to shoot portraits will gain more from the extra zoom than they'll lose from the smaller f-number. The RX100 VI should give greater background blur than the RX100 V, along with more flattering perspective, if you can take a step or two back and zoom to 100mm or longer.

Autofocus employs a hybrid system, with 315 on-chip phase-detection points that cover 65% of the frame, coupled with 25 contrast-detection areas. Sony

claims that this brings the world's fastest AF for a 1in sensor camera to just 0.03sec. High-density Tracking AF clusters focus points around moving subjects for increased accuracy, while Sony's much-touted Eye AF is also on board for shooting portraits.

As usual from Sony, the RX100 VI has an impressive video specification. It can record 4K 3840x2160 footage at 25fps with full pixel readout, which delivers highly detailed footage with no field of view crop. There's a raft of advanced features such as Hybrid Log-Gamma for HDR recording, and super-slow motion video at 250fps, 500fps, or 1000fps. This makes the lack of any provision for an external microphone perplexing.

Beyond the camera's remarkable core spec, it doesn't sport much in the way of extras. For instance, there's no built-in intervalometer for time-lapse

shooting, and with the demise of Sony's PlayMemories in-camera apps, no way of adding one except by plugging an external controller into the micro USB port. Likewise, there's no in-camera raw converter for optimising your images before sharing them.

Wi-Fi is of course built in, along with both NFC and Bluetooth connectivity. But the latter is only used for geotagging your images, and you don't get any of the neat features it brings to the Panasonic TZ200. So you can't use your phone as a simple, always-connected remote release, or browse through your photos while your camera is safely stowed in your pocket or bag. Sony's PlayMemories Mobile app for Android and iOS does at least provide full remote control of the camera, complete with live view display, and allows you to transfer images to your phone or tablet for sharing.



The tilting screen is great
for low-angle shots like this
24mm equiv, 1/30sec at f/3.5, ISO 3200

Build and handling

While the RX100 IV uses a different lens to its predecessor, in other respects Sony has recycled pretty much the same design. This is a mixed blessing. On the positive side, the metal-shelled body feels reassuringly robust, and the smooth, clean lines make it easy to slip into a pocket, aided by the top-plate controls all being flush to the body. Both the flash and viewfinder pop up from the top plate, released by mechanical switches; it's pretty astonishing that Sony has managed to fit them in.

That smooth body has its drawbacks, though: as usual for an RX100, it has all the assured handling of a bar of soap. At the very least you'll need a wrist strap to save the camera when it inevitably slips from your grasp, and I'd strongly advise adding the stick-on Sony AG-R2 grip. But it's ridiculous that you need a £14 accessory just to be able to hold the thing securely. The grip adds nothing to the camera's size, so should be built-in from the start, or at least included in the box.

When the original RX100 appeared, the excitement of seeing a relatively large sensor in a body design copied from Canon's excellent PowerShot S series was tempered by the fact that Sony had managed to make a complete mess of the control logic. Six years and five generations later, it's still a

pretty horrible thing to use. A good camera should get out of your way and make it easy for you to change all the key settings, but with the RX100 VI, I usually felt like I was fighting against it instead.

At least Sony has now added a touchscreen, meaning it's finally possible to select the focus point quickly when you're shooting with either the screen or the viewfinder. You can also double-tap to zoom into images during playback, and then scroll around them to check focus and detail. But it doesn't do anything else: you can't even change any shooting settings or make menu selections by touch. Compared to Canon and Panasonic's fully integrated touch interfaces, this just feels lazy; it's as if the iPhone never happened.

As a result, most of your interaction with the camera comes via the physical controls. They get the job done, but they're far from brilliant. The buttons on the back are small and fiddly, and being flush to the camera's surface, near-impossible to locate by touch with the camera held to your eye. The rear dial doubles as a four-way d-pad, but while it's one of the better examples of its type, it's uncomfortably placed for viewfinder use compared to the TZ200's top-plate dial, which falls much more naturally under your thumb. Likewise the exposure compensation and ISO

controls are located on the 'down' button of the d-pad and the C button at the camera's lower right corner, as far away from your thumb's resting position as they could possibly be – on a sensible camera these would be placed at your fingertips.

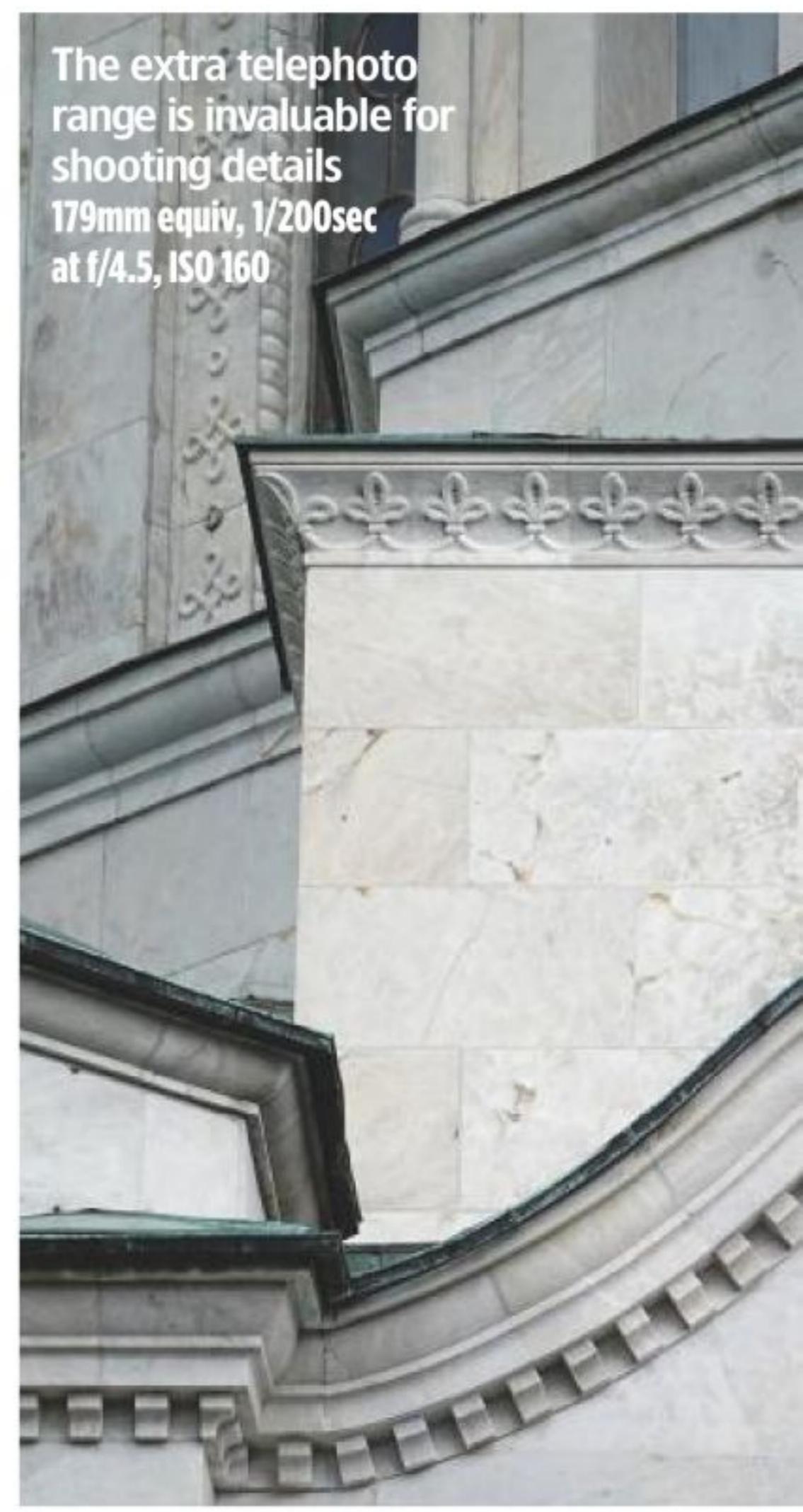
Like most modern compacts, the RX100 VI also has a control ring placed around the lens. Out of the box it mostly does the same thing as the rear dial, which doesn't make much sense. Luckily you can customise it to operate other functions instead; I set it for exposure compensation. Unfortunately, being smoothly rotating it's not very satisfactory for changing exposure settings, as the lack of any tactile feedback precludes quick 'count the clicks' changes, while also making it easy to knock inadvertently. This all stands in stark contrast to Canon's similarly sized PowerShot G7 X Mark II, with its large buttons and excellent switchable clicked / clickless lens dial.

Sony highlights the fact that the zoom speed is customisable, but even at its standard setting, I found it just a little faster than ideal for precise composition. The alternative setting is even quicker, and while this will get you from wide to telephoto very rapidly indeed, it won't let you hit any intermediate point with the faintest degree of precision. As is often the case you can get finer control of

the zoom by assigning it to the lens dial, but then changing exposure settings becomes even more of a trial.

Secondary functions are accessed from the well-implemented onscreen Fn Menu. Usefully, this can be customised separately for stills and video shooting, which you'll almost certainly want to do. This will let you minimise trips into the huge, poorly organised and often cryptically labelled menu system.

The extra telephoto range is invaluable for shooting details
179mm equiv, 1/200sec at f/4.5, ISO 160



Thankfully you can now build a list of your most-used settings in the My Menu section. You can also save shooting configurations for recall from the MR position on the mode dial, which is equally well worth setting up.

After using it for a few weeks, though, I have to conclude that the RX100 VI's high-end aspirations have completely outgrown its body design. If you're prepared to treat it as a glorified point-and-shoot, with zoom and exposure compensation your main creative controls, then it works OK. But Sony really needs to rework the control setup so that all its clever technology is easier to access.

Viewfinder and screen

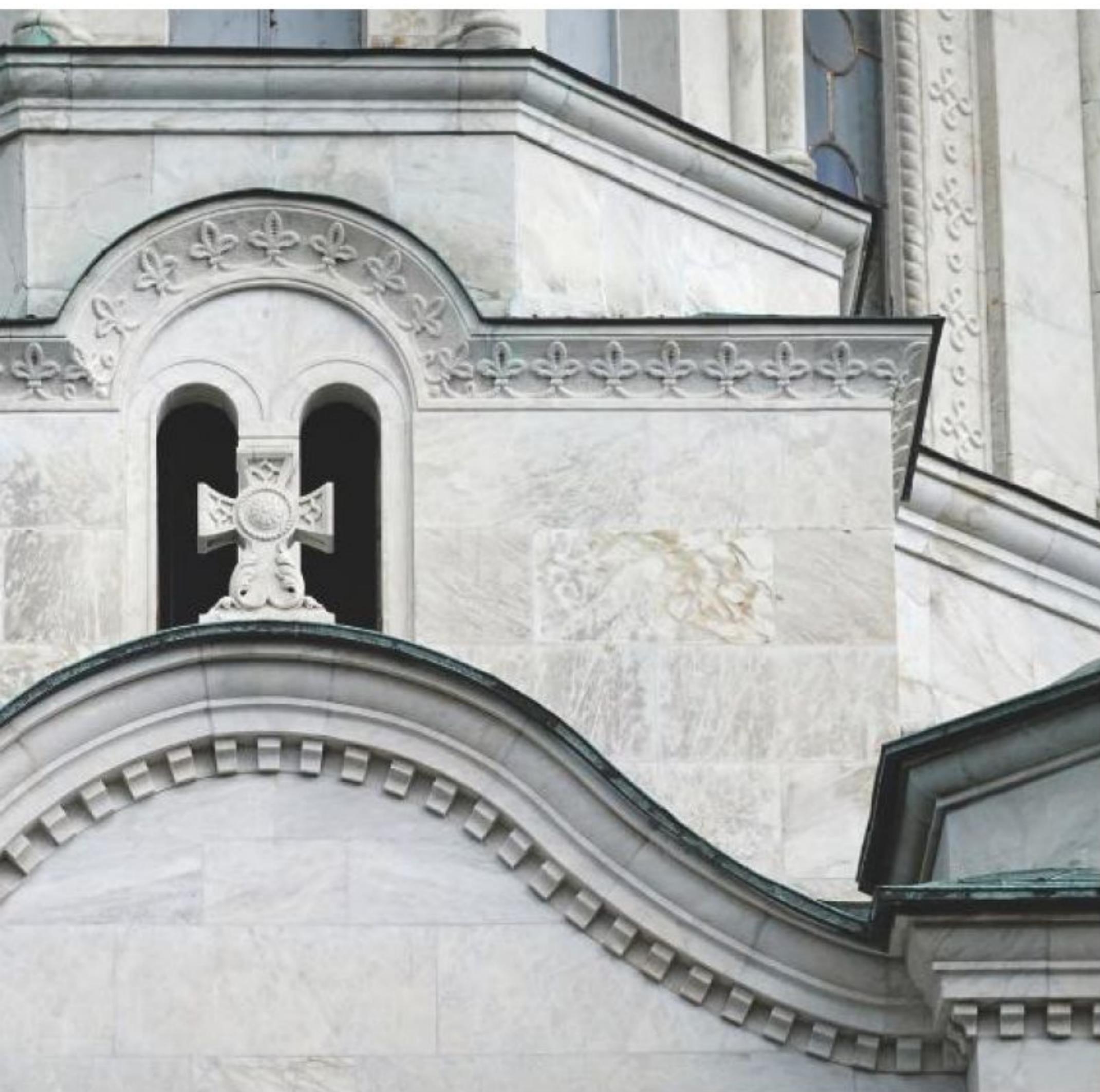
When it comes to composing your images, this is one area where the RX100 VI has a real edge over its biggest rival. Not only is its pop-up EVF rather larger than the Panasonic TZ200's corner-mounted example, its screen tilts too, while the TZ200's is fixed in place. In fact its degree of movement is unusually large: a double-hinged design means it can tilt 90° downwards for overhead shooting, or 180° forward for selfies or vlogging. The screen's main failing is that it's not especially bright, so unlike the TZ200's it's not very usable in direct sunlight. A super-bright Sunny Weather setting is available to help with this, but requires a trip to the menu to activate – I'd add it to the My Menu.

Popping-up the viewfinder also turns the camera on, which makes perfect sense. Unfortunately pushing it down again turns the camera off, which is irritating given that you probably just wanted to use the screen instead. Thankfully you can disable this behaviour, but only by trawling through the menu to decipher 'Function for VF close' and set it to the obliquely titled 'Not Power OFF'.

On a more positive note, the viewfinder itself is really very good: the 2.36-million-dot OLED is bright and clear, and its 0.59x equivalent magnification matches many mid-range DSLRs or mirrorless cameras. Its design is a considerable improvement on previous RX100 generations too, as you no longer have to pull out the eyepiece after popping-up the EVF, or retract it before pushing the finder back down. This makes a surprisingly large improvement to the experience of using the camera. But I still prefer using a finder that's fixed in place and always available, and on countless occasions I put the camera up to my eye only to find that the viewfinder wasn't there.

Autofocus

Sony has re-used the same AF system that we've previously seen on both the short-zoom RX100 V and the RX10 IV bridge camera. I was extremely impressed by it on the latter, and it continues to work in much the same vein ➤



Focal points

Sony has squeezed some impressive technology into the RX100 VI's petite frame

Connectors

The Micro USB 'multi-connector' can be used for charging the battery or powering the camera directly, attaching a wired remote control, or copying your images onto a computer. Below it is a micro HDMI output for connecting to a TV.

Lens

The 24-200mm equivalent 8x zoom uses 15 elements in 12 groups, with 8 aspheric elements including 4 Advanced Aspheric lenses, and 2 ED glass elements.

Battery

One disadvantage of the pocket-sized body is that it can only accommodate the small NP-BX1 battery, which is rated for just 220 shots using the viewfinder, or 240 with the LCD.

Connectivity

Built-in Wi-Fi allows connection to a smartphone or tablet for image transfer or remote control via Sony's free PlayMemories Mobile app for Android or iOS. NFC can quickly set up a connection with compatible Android devices, while Bluetooth can be used for geotagging your images.



Fn Menu

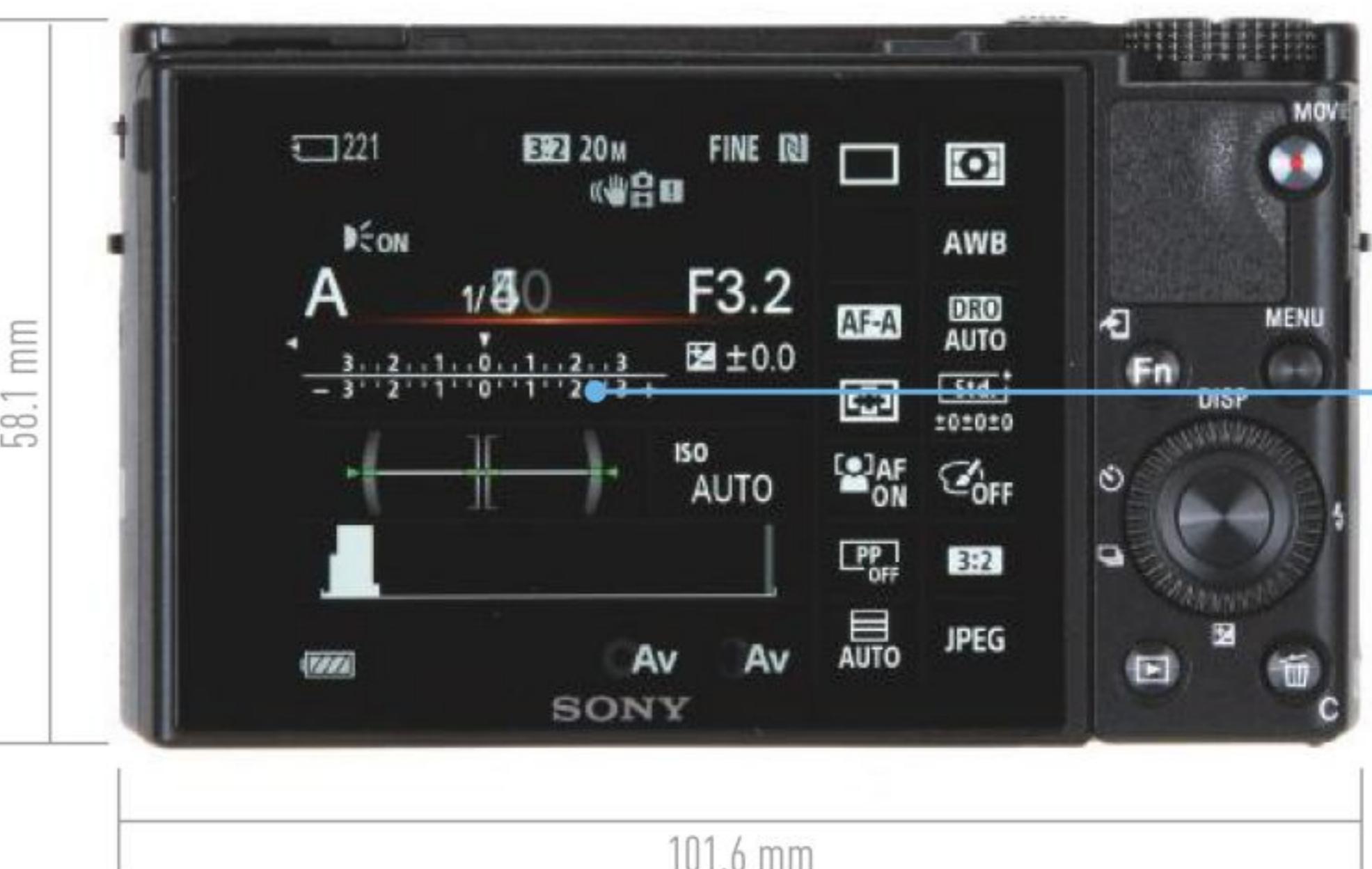
Secondary settings are accessed using an onscreen function menu. It's clearly laid-out and quick to use, and can be customised for stills and video independently.

Flash

A tiny flash unit pops up out of the top-plate, released by a sliding switch just behind the power button.

Touchscreen

The RX100 series finally gains a touchscreen, which can be used to set the focus point and zoom into your images in playback, but not change settings. At least it can be set to face forwards to selfies.





► here. It acquires focus on static subjects in the blink of an eye; indeed it's noticeably quicker than the Panasonic TZ200, which itself is absolutely no slouch.

However it's when you point the camera at a moving subject that the system really comes into its own. It can keep track of a moving subject, and more importantly keep it in focus, while shooting faster than almost any DSLR or mirrorless camera. Like the RX10 IV it will occasionally drift away from perfect focus for a frame or two, but it'll quickly snap back. This kind of autofocus performance is remarkable for a pocket camera.

Out of the box, the RX100 VI is set up to select the focus point automatically and decide whether or not the subject is moving. Sometimes it gets this right, but just as often it doesn't, and at this point you'll need to override its decisions. When you're composing with the screen, you can tell the camera where to focus by tapping the subject, but there's no sensible way to do this when you're using the viewfinder. Instead you'll need to either enable the Touch Pad function, or reconfigure the button in the centre of the rear dial to Focus Standard and set the focus area mode to Flexible Spot. But if you choose the latter, you can't activate Eye AF for portraits.

Performance

With all the processing power it has on board, you'd expect the RX100 VI to be an exceptionally snappy performer, and in most respects it delivers. It powers up in about a second, and from then on responds instantly to all of the controls. In particular its high-speed autofocus and shooting means that you should rarely miss a shot.

While the usual array of metering modes are available, I found the autoexposure to be sufficiently reliable in the multi-pattern mode that I didn't need to use any of the others. Naturally you're aided here by the electronic viewfinder giving a reliable preview of how the image is going to look, so you can apply exposure compensation if necessary. If anything, I saw a slight tendency towards underexposure, which means the camera generally won't clip highlight detail. Sony's Dynamic Range Optimiser function does a great job of bringing out shadow detail in high-contrast scenes.

I've often found auto white balance to be unreliable on Sony cameras, but I had better luck with the RX100 VI, which gave more generally pleasing results. It even did well under conditions that some other cameras find confusing, for instance neutralising the green colour cast that's found in the shade of foliage on sunny

summer days. There's still a slight bias towards the cool side though, and some users may prefer to boost the saturation beyond Sony's somewhat restrained standard setting. In general, though, most of my JPEG files showed attractive colour rendition, but benefitted from minor corrections in post-processing.

Like all compact cameras, the lens-shutter design is extremely quiet. In fact if you turn off the various operational beeps and fake shutter sounds and engage the electronic shutter, the camera is completely silent. But then you get no feedback from the camera that it is actually shooting, so it could do with the same kind of visual cues Sony has used in its high-speed Alpha 9 mirrorless camera.

The camera's slim frame means that there's only space for a conventional SD slot rather than the faster UHS-II type, meaning it can take a long time to record a burst of images to card, especially if you shoot 24fps raw for a few seconds. This doesn't have too much impact on the camera's operation, as you can still shoot more still images or change most settings while the camera is writing. However you can't initiate video recording until it's finished, or strangely, change the continuous shooting speed.

The lens is an excellent performer considering its relatively long range. Like most extended-

range zooms it's very sharp in the centre wide open, but less good in the corners, and you'll want to stop it down to f/4 or f/5.6 when shooting scenes such as landscapes where there's detail right across the scene. In the middle of the zoom range the lens is simply stunning, giving excellent sharpness from corner to corner. Likewise at the telephoto end, the centre is still very sharp, although the corners are a touch soft at maximum aperture. Indeed in my side-by-side comparisons, the RX100 VI's lens is so much sharper at 200mm and f/4.5 than the TZ200's at 360mm and f/6.3 that in good light, you get almost the same level of detail from both cameras when shooting distant subjects. One word of warning though; I'd avoid the minimum aperture of f/11, as it gives very soft images due to diffraction.

One real weakness of the RX100, though, is battery life. The small NP-BX1 battery is rated for 220 to 240 shots per charge, depending on whether you use the LCD or viewfinder. But to get anything close to this in real-world use you'll need to configure much more aggressive power-management settings than Sony's defaults, and obsessively power the camera off after shooting. Even then, I'd recommend buying a spare battery and an external charger to make sure you can get through the day.

Lab results

Andrew Sydenham's lab tests reveal just how the camera performs

Our cameras and lenses are tested using the industry-standard Image Engineering IQ-Analyser software. Visit www.image-engineering.de for more details

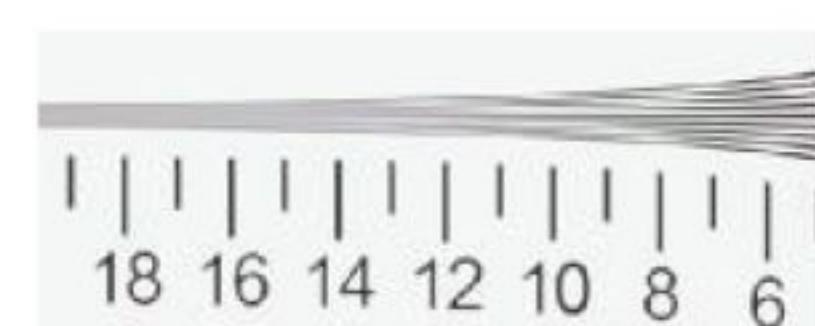


We've seen this sensor and processor combination in several Sony cameras now, so it's very much a known quantity. As in the RX100 V and RX10 IV, it delivers highly detailed images at low ISO settings, while keeping noise fairly well under control at sensitivity settings up to ISO 1600. In terms of sensor output quality there's no significant advantage over compact cameras with 1in backside-illuminated sensors, including the Panasonic TZ100 and TZ200. Instead the main image-quality differentiators will be the lens and the in-camera JPEG processing.

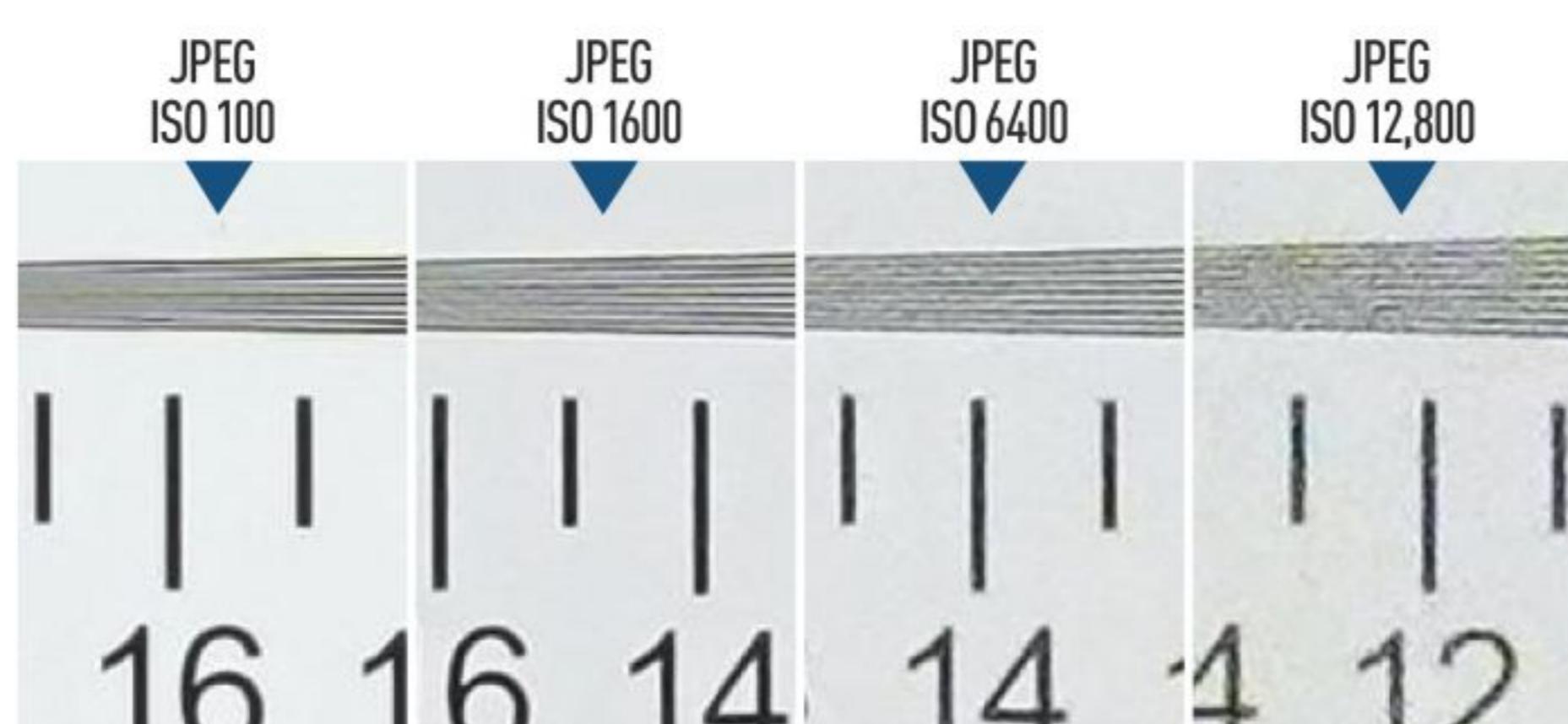
Resolution

Looking at the camera's JPEG output, the RX100 VI resolves around 3200 lines per picture height at ISO 80, with the camera blurring higher frequencies in a bid to minimise processing artefacts. The resolution drops only slowly as the sensitivity is raised, with almost

3000 l/ph registered at ISO 1600. Above this it falls more rapidly though, to 2800 l/ph at ISO 6400 and 2400 l/ph at ISO 12,800. In raw, I'd expect to see higher resolution at lower ISOs, but with the risk of false colour and aliasing.



On the right we show details from our resolution chart test pattern (above). Multiply the number beneath the lines by 200 to give the resolution in lines per picture height.



Diorama



The crops shown below are taken from the area outlined above in red

JPEG ISO 100



JPEG ISO 3200



JPEG ISO 400

JPEG ISO 6400

JPEG ISO 1600



JPEG ISO 12,800



Verdict



**Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
Recommended**



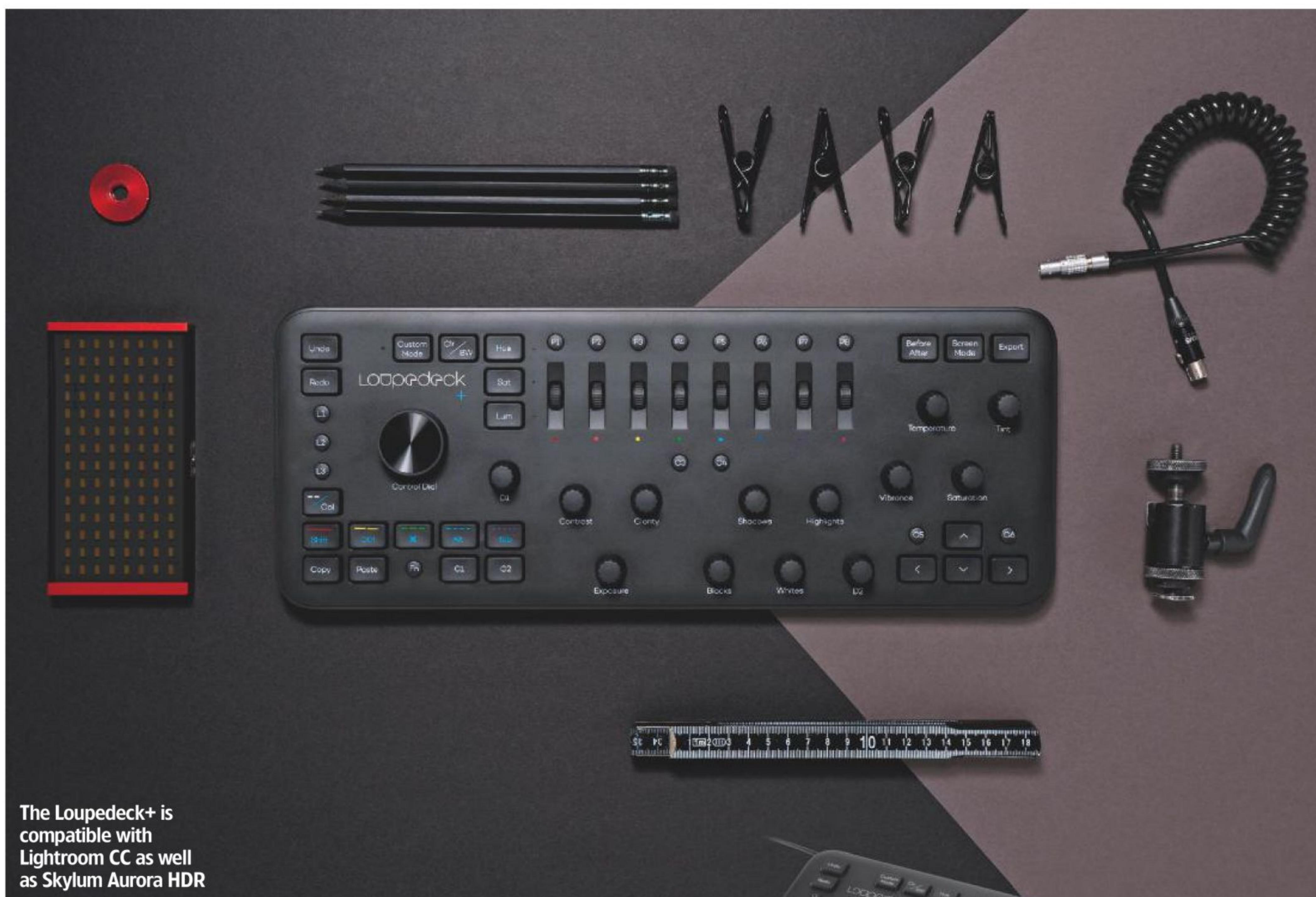
THERE'S no doubt that the Sony RX100 VI is an astounding technological feat. After all, here's a camera with a 24-200mm equivalent zoom, built-in viewfinder, 24fps shooting at full resolution and 4K video recording. Yet this is all somehow crammed into a body that takes up barely any more space than a Rollei 35, which many AP readers will fondly remember as one of the smallest 35mm cameras ever made. Despite its tiny size, the RX100 VI also has some clear advantages over its Panasonic rivals: it's quicker, its pop-up viewfinder is larger, and its tilting LCD is extremely useful. Oh, and it takes really good pictures, too.

The first problem, though, is that you have to part with an awful lot of money for the privilege of owning one – £1,150 is a ridiculous sum to spend on what is essentially an upmarket point-and-shoot. You'll also need to budget for a handgrip, a couple of spare batteries and a charger, just to get through the day without dropping the camera or running out of juice. The Panasonic TZ200 and TZ100 provide everything most users are likely to need at a considerably lower price.

The other problem with the RX100 VI is that it's just so fiddly to use. Luckily, for all its failings, the RX100 VI can be made more tolerable by exploiting its extensive customisation options. Set the lens dial to exposure compensation, turn on touch-pad AF and disable auto power-off when you push down the viewfinder, and it's merely irritating rather than infuriating.

Despite all my criticism, I'm not saying you shouldn't buy the RX100 VI. In many respects it's a brilliant camera, and more accomplished than the Panasonic TZ200. But personally, I'd struggle to justify spending £1,150 on a point-and-shoot that's so frustrating to use. But if you can afford it, and are prepared to put up with its foibles, the Sony RX100 VI is a phenomenally capable pocket travel camera.

FEATURES	8/10
BUILD & HANDLING	7/10
METERING	9/10
AUTOFOCUS	9/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	8/10
IMAGE QUALITY	8/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	9/10



The Loupedeck+ is compatible with Lightroom CC as well as Skylum Aurora HDR

Loupedeck+

Michael Topham tests a second-generation editing console

The primary role of an editing console is to make the process of editing images faster. With a fine level of control at our fingertips, it's possible, with some practice and finesse, to edit an image in seconds rather than minutes. Last year we saw a new editing console hit the market in the form of the Loupedeck – a rectangular board about the same size of an average keyboard, with an abundance of buttons, dials and knobs to take control of the most important and frequently used functions in Lightroom. A year on and its replacement has arrived – so how does the Loupedeck+ differ from the original?

For and against

- ✚ Better integration with photo-editing software
- ✚ Supports more customisable buttons
- ✚ Custom Mode allows full control of all dials
- ─ Control Dial operates loudly when pressed
- ─ Takes time to become a proficient user
- ─ Doesn't support wireless connectivity

Features

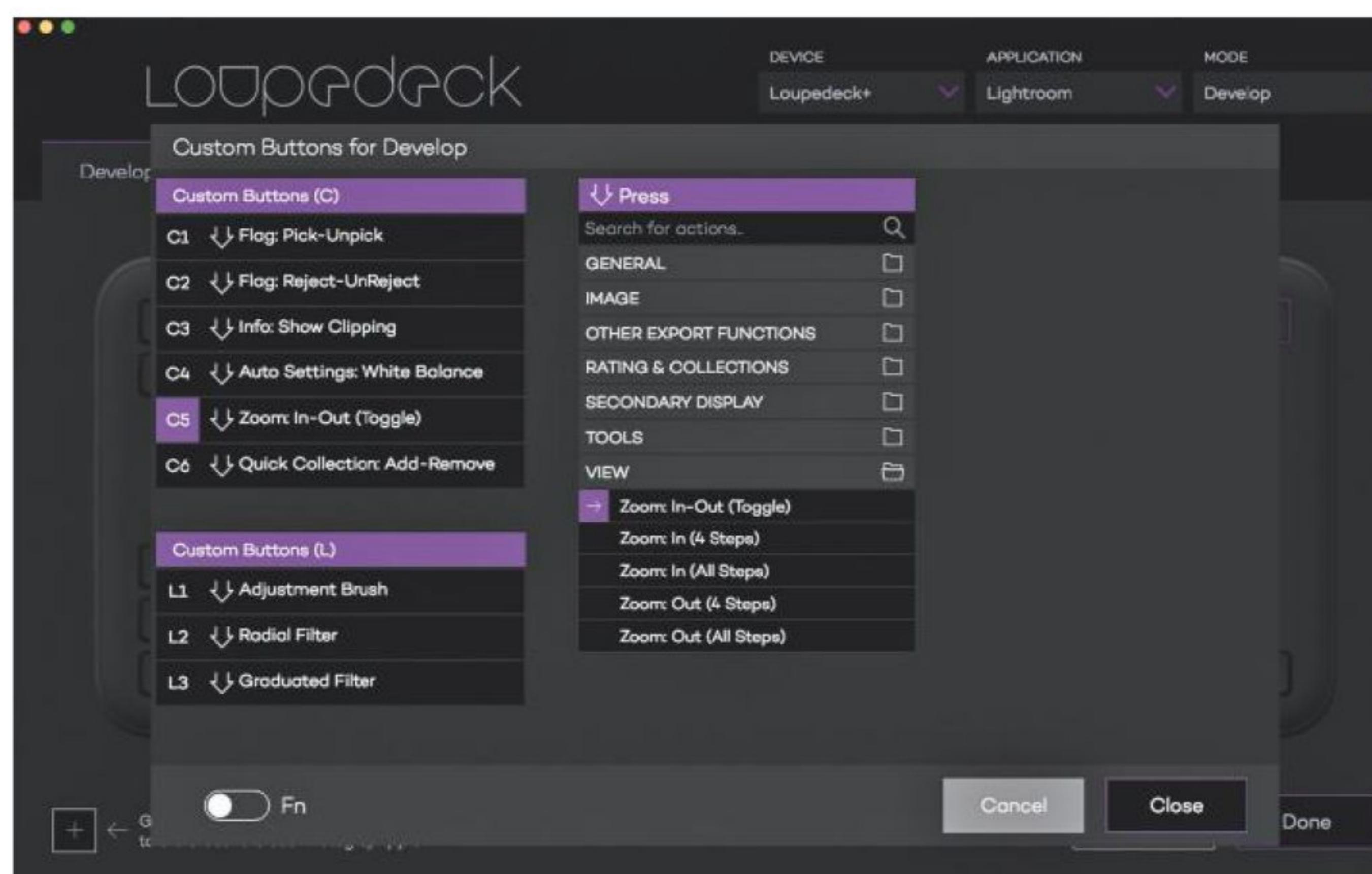
The difference between the original Loupedeck and alternative editing consoles was that it could only be used with Lightroom and no other editing software. This is not the case on the Loupedeck+. As well as being designed for use with Lightroom CC, it's now also compatible with Skylum Aurora HDR – a popular editing software choice for photographers who like to merge and edit multiple exposures. Following Loupedeck's new partnership with Skylum, the Loupedeck+ will include integration with Skylum's other photo-editing products, including Luminar, in the future. Loupedeck is also at the beta test stage of integrating the Loupedeck+ with Capture One, and we're told we can expect more software integrations to follow later in the year.

The result of all this new integration should see the Loupedeck+ appeal to a much broader audience, but has this influenced the design of the product as we know it? On first glance the Loupedeck+ looks similar to the original. The dimensions are identical and there is a wide

scattering of dials, knobs and sliders across the top surface. It looks understated in its all matte-black finish and the flat buttons are replaced by keyboard-esque keys. These are quiet if pressed softly but can be quite off-putting if you're heavy handed or they're hit hard. As for the Rotate/Crop wheel, which has been renamed the Control Dial, it offers better feedback when it's turned, but remains very loud when it's depressed and could really benefit from being better damped. Like before, the Loupedeck+ is powered via a USB cable and can't be paired wirelessly like Wacom tablets that support a rechargeable battery and wireless accessory kit.

Button layout

Loupedeck has taken the opportunity to refine some of the buttons and knobs on its latest editing console. Though many remain unchanged, there are a few new additions that existing users will need to learn if they decide to upgrade. In total there are 40 buttons/keys, 13 knobs, 8 dials and one Rotate/Crop wheel.



Reassigning the function of any custom button in the software is an easy process



Users of the original Loupedeck will need a bit of time to get used to Loupedeck+'s new features

The star rating keys have been relabelled Shift, Ctrl, Command, Alt and Tab to perform common keyboard functions, but they can still be used as before to star rate images or assign colour labels in Lightroom. The pick and zoom keys below are replaced by two customisable buttons (C1 and C2) and three new circular buttons fill the space above and below the brush key, which has been removed.

A new custom mode button with its own LED replaces the full screen button. When active it lets you assign other desired functions to the colour, exposure and tone knobs. Up at the top right a new screen mode button to toggle between screen views is found between the before/after and export buttons. Two new customisable buttons (C5 and C6) are added above the directional keys, bringing the total number of customisable buttons on the deck up to six. The other two (C3 and C4) are positioned as before below the green and cyan colour dials.

In use

To experience the new updates and integrations of the Loupedeck+, I had to update Lightroom and my Loupedeck software to version 2.1. Opening the new software is a great way to familiarise yourself with which functions are assigned to what. From the top you can switch between different applications and modes, such as the

develop and library modules in Lightroom, or the Brush, Radial and Gradient in Aurora HDR. Reassigning the function of any custom button in the software couldn't be easier and you now get the option to search manually if you can't find what you're looking for from the various folders and lists. Each custom button/dial has a secondary function too. For example, the D2 dial adjusts Sharpening as default in Lightroom, but by holding the Fn button at the same time it controls noise reduction.

The new L1, L2 and L3 buttons are an excellent addition for activating the Adjustment Brush, Radial Filter and Graduated filter from your fingertips and the C5 and C6 buttons are set up for inspecting images at 100% or adding an image to a quick collection. The circular buttons that line the top of the console are handy for applying your favourite presets to an image and these can also be used with the Fn button to assign up to 16 presets in total. The dials and knobs offer extremely precise control. Should you wish to reset an adjustment back to zero you can do so easily by depressing them. A tip for anyone wishing to crop and rotate an image precisely is to hold the Fn button at the same time the control dial is turned.

Compatibility

The Loupedeck+ is compatible with both Mac (OS 10.12 or later version) and PC (Windows 10, Windows 8.1 or Windows 7). If you're planning to use it with Lightroom you'll need to be running Adobe Lightroom 7.4 or later and an internet connection is required to download and install the software. Loupedeck is also offering a loyalty cashback offer to owners of the original Loupedeck. Upgrade and you'll be entitled to £35 cashback, but this offer only lasts until 25 August 2018. Visit <https://loupedeck-upgrade.com> for more information.

The Loupedeck+ represents good value for money



Our verdict

The Loupedeck+ isn't drastically different from the original, but has been refined. When I reviewed the Loupedeck I made the comment that it was short of customisable buttons and knobs. This issue has been addressed on the Loupedeck+ and the excellent custom mode option, in addition to the L1, L2 and L3 buttons for accessing the Adjustment Brush, Radial Filter and Graduated Filter, are very well received. Users of the original Loupedeck will need to retrain their muscle memory if they upgrade, but with regular use they'll quickly learn the positioning of the new buttons and knobs just as I did. The new software makes it a breeze to set up the console, and most importantly, any adjustment you make occurs in real time with no frustrating lag. The price of the original was more than most amateurs who dabble in Lightroom were prepared to pay, so with its improved

integration with other editing software and revised price (£199), it represents much better value for money. If you are fed up of making time-consuming cursor movements across the screen, or like the sound of editing a large batch of images in quick time, the Loupedeck+ is worth it – just be prepared to persevere with it as you re-educate yourself to work in a different way.

The dials and knobs offer precise control

Data file

Price £199
Compatible with PC and Mac
 Requires Adobe Lightroom v7.4 or later
 Customisable preset buttons
Powered by USB 2.0
Size 39.5x15x4cm
Weight 0.67kg

Amateur Photographer
Testbench Recommended





Taken by MPB's Ian Howorth

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Kingston Nucleum USB-C hub

Andy Westlake tests a dongle that's ideal for photographers using the latest laptops

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FIRST they came for your headphone socket, then they came for your SD card slot. Apple devices have historically been preferred by creative professionals, including photographers, since before the advent of the iPhone. But after removing the headphone socket from its phones, the firm has also infuriatingly removed the SD card slot from its laptops, along with full-sized USB ports. Sadly where Apple goes, other firms tend to follow, and the latest Windows ultrabooks are showing a similar trend, with the likes of the Dell XPS 15 now also forgoing an SD reader.

This is a huge irritation, as these are precisely the kind of machines that serious photographers need: lightweight, powerful and with accurate, wide-colour-gamut screens. But the manufacturers have decided that it's crucial to make them as thin as possible, so we're supposed to be happy with the do-everything USB-C instead.

Unfortunately, to make USB-C do everything, we have to buy external dongles that add all those ports back. Until now, this has meant buying either a pricey option from a quality brand such as Hyperdrive, or choosing between Chinese alternatives of largely unknown quality. I've been using a Letscom hub with my MacBook Pro for the past few months

and while it mostly works, one of its USB ports is unreliable, and it's prone to losing track of SD cards.

At this point, the wonderfully named Kingston Nucleum comes as a relief. It's from a highly reputable brand, and at £60, it's not ludicrously expensive either. It includes SD and MicroSD card slots, two USB 3.0 inputs, an HDMI output, and two USB-C ports, one of which can be used to plug in your charger and power your device.

Verdict

With a sturdy aluminium housing the Nucleum is extremely well-made, and the connector cable feels like it's not going to fall apart in a hurry. It plugs in firmly, so won't disconnect from your laptop at the merest hint of movement. At 12.7mm long it's not the smallest hub on the market, but all the ports are well-spaced rather than being crammed together. I've found there is enough room to plug-in a compact-flash card reader between the SD slot and the USB-C input on the other side.

I've been using this device daily for a month and quite simply, it just works, giving super-fast transfer between cards and USB drives with no fuss or glitches.



Flexible connector

The hub connects to your laptop's USB-C port via a sturdy 11cm-long cable.

At a glance

- 7-in-1 USB-C hub
- Works with Windows, Mac and Android
- SD and microSD card readers
- 127x45x14mm

Android compatible

The device can also work as a card reader with recent USB-C-equipped Android smartphones.



ALSO CONSIDER

Hyperdrive SLIM 8-in-1 USB-C hub

About the only connector missing from the Nucleum is an RJ-45 ethernet port. If you need one of these, Hyperdrive's latest model includes one alongside 4K HDMI, 4K Mini DisplayPort, 2 x USB-A 3.0, USB-C Power Delivery, SD and microSD connectors.



Tech Support

Email your questions to: ap@ti-media.com, Twitter @AP_Magazine and #AskAP, or Facebook. Or write to Technical Support, Amateur Photographer Magazine, TI Media Limited, Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF

Panasonic/Olympus image stabilisation

QI understand the Panasonic in-lens image stabilisation (IS) is not compatible with the Olympus body. My question is, should I switch the Panasonic lens stabilisation 'on' or 'off'? When the lens is switched on you can see the stabilising effect in the viewfinder, but it is on all the time the camera is switched on and not just when the shutter button is half pressed (flattening the battery quicker).

Geoff Thomson

APanasonic in-lens stabilisation certainly can be used with an Olympus body but not at the same time as the Olympus body's own sensor-shift stabilisation. On more recent Olympus bodies, like the one you have, there is a menu option that can enable the prioritisation of lens IS when using a Panasonic lens. This is off by default. You may be referring to a different compatibility issue. Both Olympus and Panasonic have separately developed in-body and in-lens stabilisation systems that work together to maximise the stabilisation headroom. However, these systems only work with combinations of the same make lens and body. Even then, only selected bodies will work like this with selected lenses. I would advise you to use in-lens IS for longer focal length lenses and in-body IS for focal lengths of around 200mm and shorter.



Recent Olympus cameras have a menu setting to prioritise in-lens IS when using Panasonic lenses

Discoloured 35mm slides

QI have a collection of 3,000 35mm slides taken between 1967 and 1992. Approximately 10% of them have taken on a strong purple cast making them virtually useless. What is the cause of this? All slides were taken with Ektachrome 100 or Kodachrome 50 and processed by the same recognised film processor, or Kodak for the Kodachrome. All the slides were kept at ambient temperature in slide boxes not exposed to the light. Age does not seem to be a factor as the 1992 slides are as badly affected as the 1967 ones. I can't find any pattern in the discoloured slides – it seems quite random.

Dr Barry Culpin

AThere could be a number of reasons for the specific degradation of the slides affected, but the basic issue is the fundamental vulnerability of chromogenic dyes used in these films. A common reason for the reddish/purple casts that appear is the breakdown of cyan dyes, but all dye colours can be affected by high temperatures, humidity and oxidation, even when stored in light-tight containers; air pollution can also play its part. Professional archival storage will involve humidity reduction, low temperatures and even oxygen-free atmospheres. As to why only some of your slides are affected can only really be answered by knowing how those sets were stored throughout their lives. You might even consider what the unexposed film was subjected to before it went into the camera. If they were stored in exactly the same place and under the same conditions as the unaffected ones, then the only explanation can be that they were used, perhaps for projection or some other use, and during that time exposed to one or more

Polarising filters, by their very nature, can't be clear



Is it possible to get a clear polarising filter?

QI have a CPL filter for my Pentax K-70 but it darkens the image, and I also notice the colour changes compared to when I don't use the filter. So I have been wondering if I can get a polarising filter that will do the things I expect of it, like cut through glare and reflections and bring out the structure of clouds and so on, but without darkening and changing the colour?

Todd Kendrick

AA polarising filter stops light waves oscillating in certain planes. By definition, light is blocked and so the filter will darken the image – there is no escaping from that. Filters with optical coating will reduce a bit of the light lost through reflection but it won't make a huge difference. It's arguable that the quality of a polarising filter will make it more effective, both in reducing glare and reflections, but also in controlling colour variation. Polarising filters do vary in price by a remarkable degree. However, again the very principle of stopping a portion of the light from the scene in the way a polariser works will alter colour and contrast subtly and to varying degrees. These variations will shift across the image frame, being especially pronounced towards the corners, which is why, for example, blue skies will be darker in the corners when using a polariser.

degradation factors. There might also be a film production batch issue, but this is probably unlikely. It's interesting that your observation is that both your Kodachrome and Ektachrome slides exhibit the same discolouration as these two film types normally colour-shift differently. Ektachrome tends to go red and Kodachrome goes blue. Ektachrome is much less

resistant to colour shifts than Kodachrome. Both will also be affected by long periods of being subjected to the high-intensity light of a projector. The only positive thing I can say is that there is a good chance that digital scanning and colour correction could be effective in restoring acceptable colour.

Q&A compiled by Ian Burley

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F2 CAMCRAFT MAGAZINE

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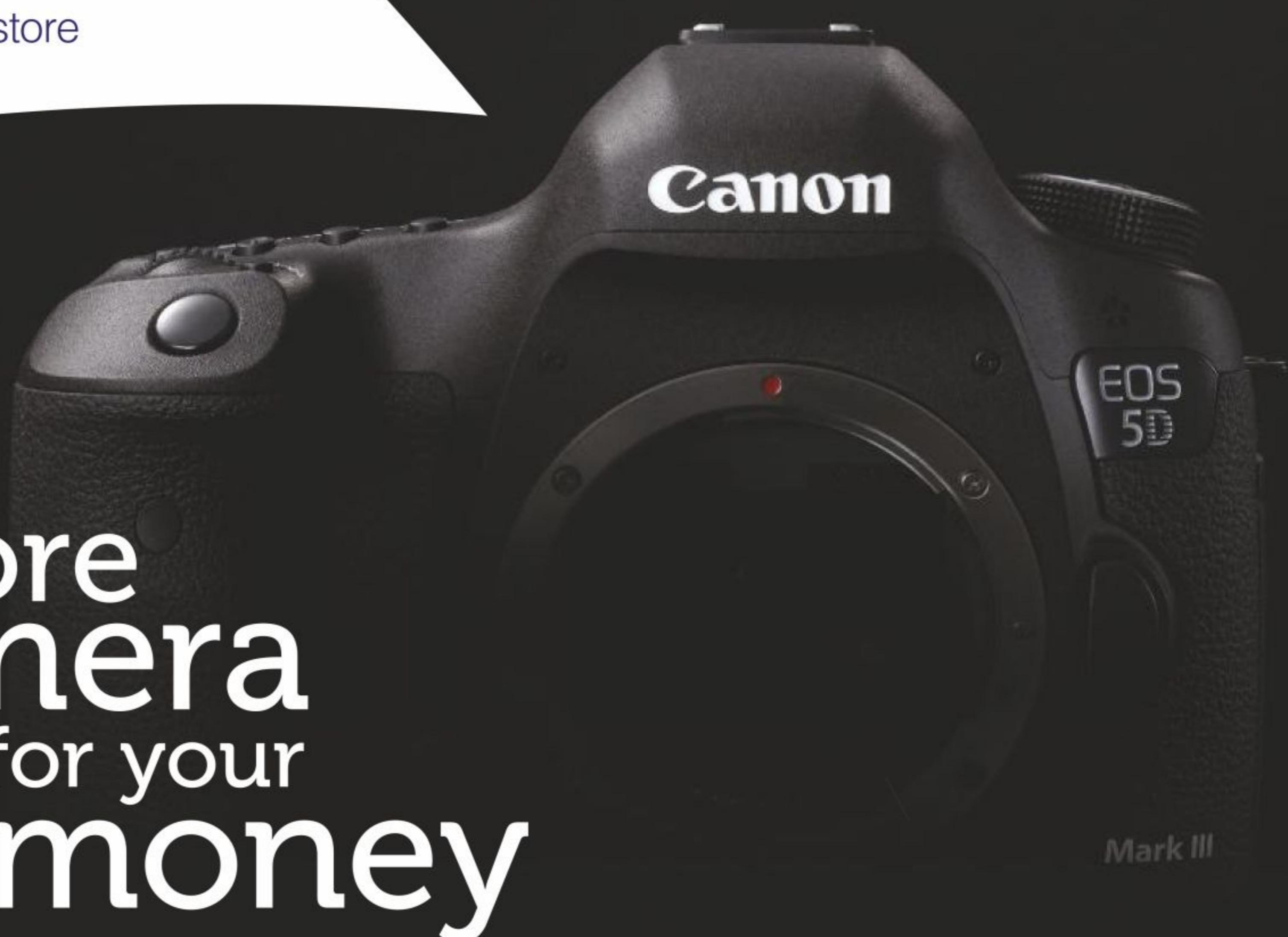
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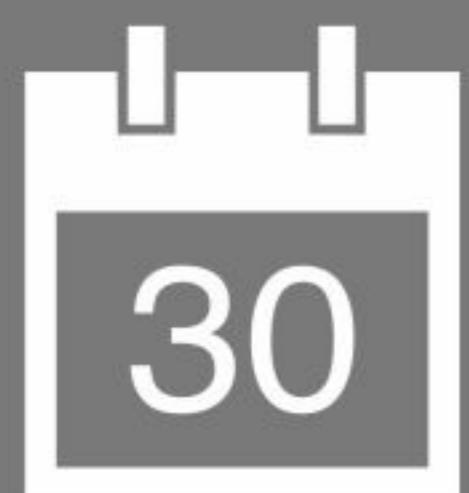
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Tech Talk



The Robot Royal 24, with single or continuous wind lever on the left of the lens and shutter speed control on the right

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Robot Royal 24

John Wade looks at one of the best clockwork-driven motor drive cameras

LAUNCHED 1953

PRICE AT LAUNCH £95

GUIDE PRICE NOW £400-500 depending on lens

THE ROBOT I, introduced in 1934, was the first 35mm still camera with a built-in clockwork motor drive. It was the brainchild of German camera designer Heinz Kifitt. After his idea was rejected by Kodak and Agfa, Kifitt sold the design to Hans Berning, who set up his own company to produce the camera. The original Robot went through several incarnations before evolving into the final and highly prestigious Royal range. The Robot Royal 24, also known as the Model III, was the first.

Like its predecessors, the Royal 24 has a built-in clockwork motor drive. Unlike earlier cameras, where the spring was wound by a large knob on top of the body, the Royal's motor drive is wound by a key on the base. The drive can be set at 'E' for *einzel* (German for singles) to wind one frame at a time, or at 'S' for *serie* (German for series) to shoot continuously at up to five frames per second. Shutter speeds run 1/4–1/500sec.

The camera takes standard 35mm film, which is wound into a take-up cassette. The jaws of the



Top plate (left to right):
Film type reminder,
rewind knob, accessory
shoe, shutter release,
film counter lock, film
take-up knob and
frame counter

cassette open when the body is closed, and close again when it is opened to prevent scratching the emulsion during the automatic wind. It shoots 24x24mm images, more than 50 to a 36-exposure film. A coupled rangefinder in the viewfinder aids focusing.



The key on the base that winds the clockwork motor drive

The lens is removed by rotating a lever beneath. The camera reviewed here is fitted with a Schneider-Kreuznach 38mm f/2.8 standard lens, but a range from 24mm wideangle to 400mm telephoto can be found with top-flight names that include Tessar, Xenon, Sonar, Biota and more.

Look out also for the Royal 18, which shoots 18x24mm images and the Royal 36 with the more conventional 24x36mm format.

What's good Motor drive without batteries, takes 35mm film, quality lenses.

What's bad Intricate loading process, expensive accessory lenses, heavy for its size.

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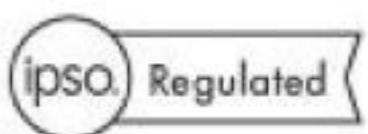
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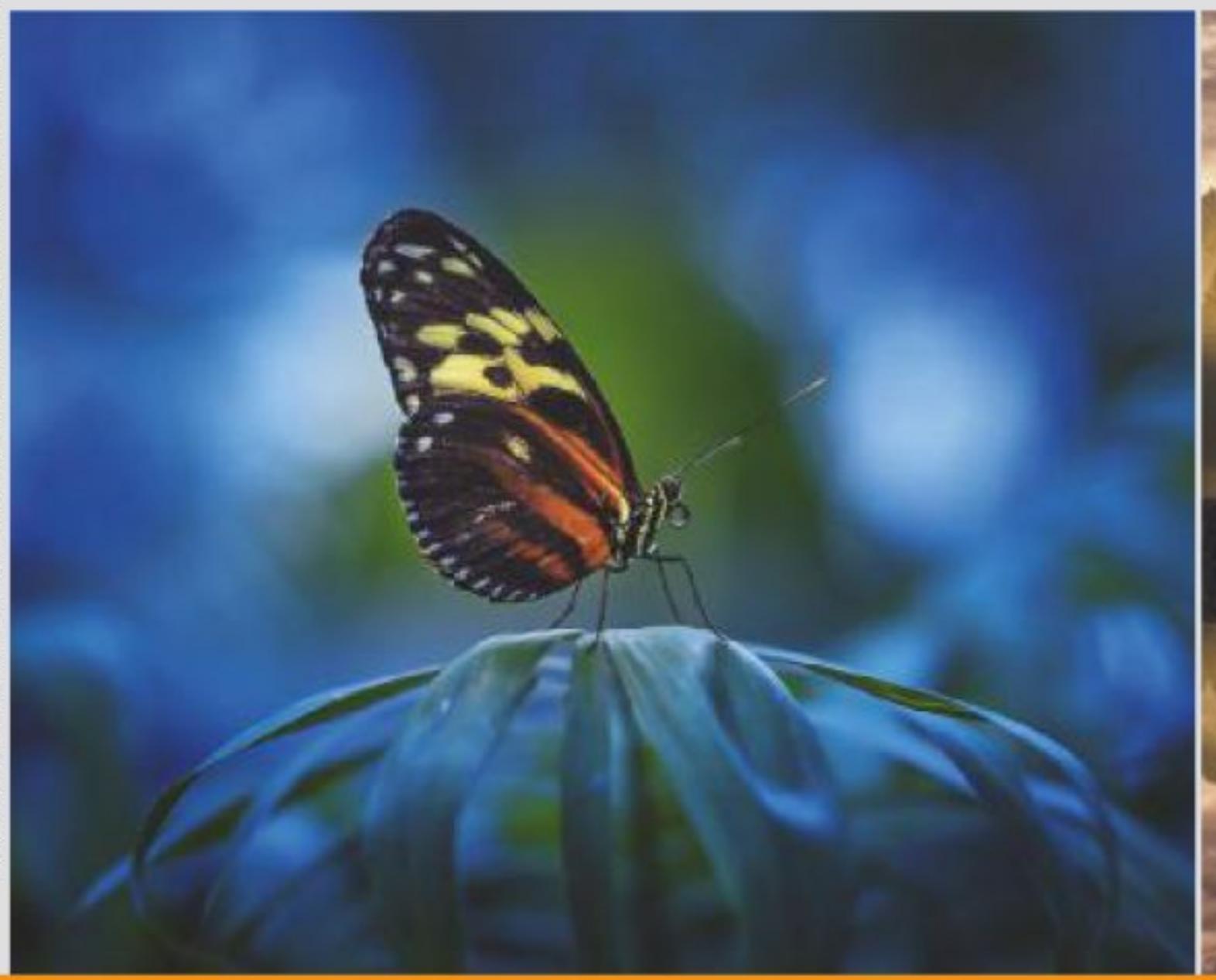
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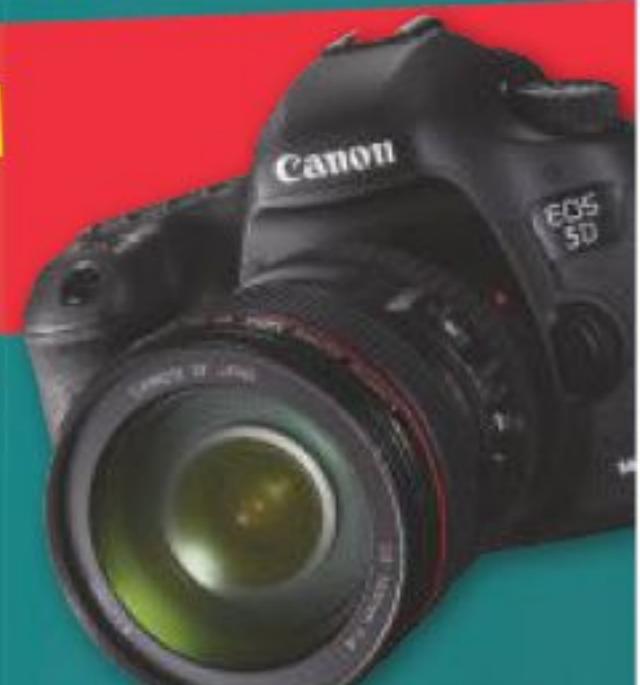
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SONY Gain control of expressive freedom

The Sony A7 III, with newly developed 24.2MP full-frame sensor

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Lens available separately



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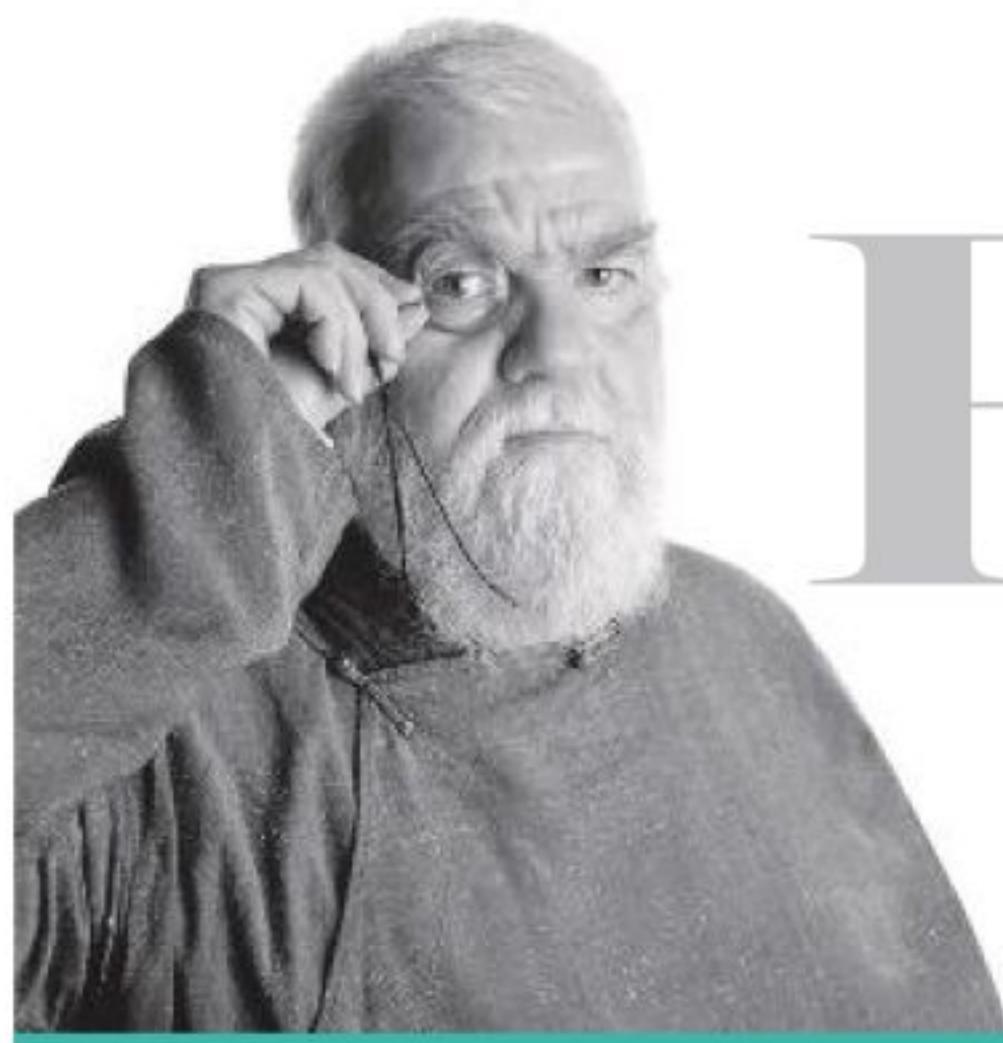
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers... 'Wreckage of World Trade Center', 12 September 2001, by Eli Reed



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Nothing lasts forever. There are ruins and semi-ruins everywhere. A thousand-year-old castle stands over the village where I live, visible from the village graveyard: mostly a hollow shell, though a staircase winds up to the battlements.

With history, we can figuratively shrug and say, yes, well, it was a long time ago. But what if it wasn't? What if it happened on our watch? Many remember the Twin Towers. There are those who remember the fire-bombing of Dresden in 1945. But none live who remember the siege of Béziers, southern France, on 22 July 1209.

Catharism was one of the stranger sects of Christianity: strange enough that the ill-named Pope Innocent III declared them heretics, and raised the so-called Albigensian Crusade. Arnaud Amalric, Abbot of Citeaux, Papal legate, commanded the army that besieged

Béziers, a hotbed of the heresy. When the city fell, the army realised that it could not distinguish between orthodox Catholics and Good Christians, as the Cathars called themselves. They asked Amalric what to do. He reportedly replied *Caedite eos. Novit enim Dominus qui sunt eius* (Kill them all. God will know his own). By his own account, 20,000 were put to the sword: men, women and children.

You can dismiss this as 'whataboutery', the technique of trying to distract attention from one terrible thing by referring to another: preferably something even worse. And the figure of 20,000 is almost certainly an exaggeration. Then you look at this picture; which is as close as you can get to eternal. The cowled figure holds a hammer, not a scythe, but nonetheless he is inescapably reminiscent of the Grim Reaper, Death personified. A curious technical point is that no matter

how much you try to lighten this picture or fill the shadows, there is no face visible inside that hood. Suddenly you realise: only the background changes. Eight hundred and nine years ago someone must have hammered at the ruins of Béziers just as this man hammered in New York City in 2001. Catharism is a dualist religion. The good creator is responsible for the eternal, the spiritual. The bad creator is responsible for the transitory, the material. Who is at work here? Both. Shiva dances.

The day before I wrote these words, I drove past Béziers. It is picturesque – winding streets of honey-coloured stone, undulating tiled roofs. The massacre is long, long in the past and, of course, almost a third of those alive today were born after 11 September 2001. Even so, some things are close to eternal. There will be massacres again. God will always know his own.

AP

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at www.rogerandfrances.eu). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. Next week he considers an image by Erich Hartmann.

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